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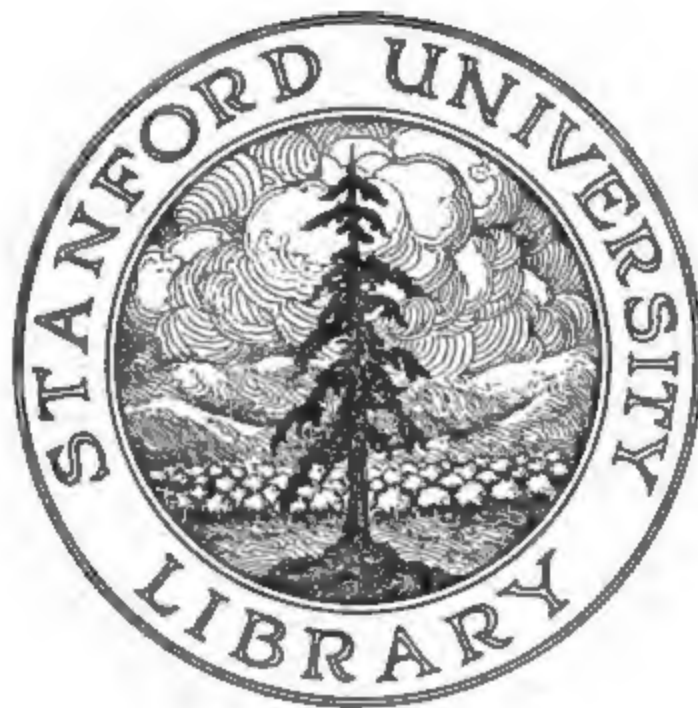
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HISTORY  
OF  
LOUISIANA.

THE FRENCH DOMINATION.

BY  
CHARLES GAYARRÉ.

*TWO VOLUMES IN ONE.*

SECOND EDITION.



NEW YORK:  
WILLIAM J. WIDDLETON, PUBLISHER.

1867.

H.



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## P R E F A C E .

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To write history, is to narrate events, and to show their philosophy, when they are susceptible of any such demonstration. When the subject is worthy of it, this is a kind of composition of the highest order, and which affords to genius an ample scope for the display of all its powers. But the information so conveyed is limited to the few, because not suited to the intelligence of the many. The number of those who have read Tacitus, Hume, Gibbon, or Clarendon, is comparatively small, when opposed to those who have pored with delight over the fascinating pages of Walter Scott. To relate events, and, instead of elucidating and analyzing their philosophy, like the historian, to point out the hidden sources of romance which spring from them—to show what materials they contain for the dramatist, the novelist, the poet, the painter, and for all the varied conceptions of the fine arts—is perhaps an humbler task, but not without its utility. When history is not disfigured by inappropriate invention, but merely embellished and made attractive by being set in a glittering frame, this artful preparation honies the cup of useful knowledge, and makes it acceptable to the lips of the multitude. Through the immortal writings of Walter Scott, many have become familiar with historical events, and have been induced to study more serious works, who, without that tempting bait, would have turned away from what appeared to them to be but a dry and barren field, too unpromising to invite examination, much less cultivation. To the bewitching pen of the wonderful magician of her romantic hills, Scotland owes more for the popular extension of her fame, than to the doings of the united host of all her other writers, warriors, and statesmen.

It was in pursuing such a train of reasoning, that I came to the conclusion that the republication of my "Lectures on the Romance or Poetry of the History of Louisiana" might be a



suitable introduction to the history of that colony, which I have subsequently presented to the public in two other series of Lectures, closing with the French domination in Louisiana, when the Spaniards took final possession of that province in 1769. I have attempted to vary my style in accordance with the events I had to narrate, and to adapt it to the legendary, the romantic, the traditional, and the strictly historical elements I had to weave together, and which, I believe, I have kept sufficiently distinct. But when the sobriety or the importance of the subject required it, I have in no instance permitted my imagination to dally with what it was bound to respect. I have not forgotten that the historian is an impartial witness, who voluntarily appears before the tribunal of the world, to testify as to facts which he has investigated and studied for the instruction and benefit of present and future generations, and that he is under the most sacred obligation "to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Feeling as I did the high responsibility I had assumed, I must confess that I experienced the greatest gratification when the most competent of judges,\* after a careful examination of my labors, relieved my anxiety by writing to me: "You give at once to your State an authentic history such as scarce any other in the Union possesses. I have for many years been making manuscript and other collections, and all the best that I have found appears in your volumes." If this sentiment, which is, I am afraid, the kindly biased appreciation of friendly partiality, be confirmed by the more austere judgment of the public, I need not say, I presume, that my reward has exceeded my expectations.

\* Mr. Bancroft.

## INTRODUCTION.

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# THE POETRY,

OR THE

## ROMANCE OF THE HISTORY OF LOUISIANA.

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### FIRST SERIES OF LECTURES.

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### FIRST LECTURE.

PRIMITIVE STATE OF THE COUNTRY—EXPEDITION OF DE SOTO IN 1539—HIS DEATH  
—DISCOVERY OF THE MISSISSIPPI IN 1673, BY FATHER MARQUETTE AND JOLLET  
—THEY ARE FOLLOWED IN 1682 BY LA SALLE AND THE CHEVALIER DE TONTI  
—ASSASSINATION OF LA SALLE.

HAVING been invited by a Committee, on behalf of the People's Lyceum, to deliver one of their twelve annual Lectures, I was not long in selecting the subject of my labors. My mind had been lately engaged in the composition of the History of Louisiana, and it was natural that it should again revert to its favorite object of thought, on the same principle which impels the mightiest river to obey the laws of declivity, or which recalls and confines to its channel its gigantic volume of waters, when occasionally deviating from its course.

But in reverting now to the History of Louisiana, my intention is not to review its diversified features with the scrutinizing, unimpassioned, and austere judgment of the historian. Imposing upon myself a more grateful task, because more congenial to my taste, I shall take for the object of this Lecture, THE POETRY, OR THE ROMANCE OF THE HISTORY OF LOUISIANA.

Poetry is the daughter of Imagination, and imagination is, perhaps, one of the highest gifts of Heaven, the most refined ethereal part of the mind, because, when carried to perfection, it is the combined essence of all the finest faculties of the human intellect. There may be sound judgment, acute perceptions, depth of thought, great powers of conception, of discrimination, of research, of assimilation, of combination of ideas, without imagination, or at least without that part of it which elaborates and exalts itself into poetry; but how can we conceive the existence of a poetical imagination in its highest excellence, without all the other faculties? Without them, what imagination would not be imperfect or diseased? It is true that without imagination there may be a world within the mind, but it is a world without light. Cold it remains, and suffering from the effects of partial organization, unless by some mighty fiat imagination is breathed into the dormant mass, and the sun of poetry, emerging in the heaven of the mind, illumines and warms the several elements of which it is composed, and completes the creation of the intellect.

Hence the idea of all that is beautiful and great is concentrated in the word poetry. There is no grand conception of the mind in which that intellectual faculty which constitutes poetry is not to be detected. What is great and noble, is and must be poetical, and what is poetical must partake, in some degree or other, of what is great and noble. It is hardly possible to conceive an Alexander, a Cæsar, a Napoleon, a Newton, a Lycurgus, a Mahomet, a Michael Angelo, a Canova, or any other of those wonderful men who have carried as far as they could go, the powers of the human mind in the several departments in which they were used, without supposing them gifted with some of those faculties of the imagination which enter into

the composition of a poetical organization. Thus every art and almost every science has its poetry, and it is from the unanimous consent of mankind on this subject that it has become so common to say "the poetry" of music, of sculpture, of architecture, of dancing, of painting, of history, and even the poetry of religion, meaning that which is most pleasing to the eye or to the mind, and ennobling to the soul. We may therefore infer from the general feeling to which I have alluded, that where the spirit of poetry does not exist, there can not be true greatness; and it can, I believe, be safely averred, that to try the gold of all human actions and events, of all things and matters, the touchstone of poetry is one of the surest.

I am willing to apply that criterion to Louisiana, considered both physically and historically; I am willing that my native State, which is but a fragment of what Louisiana formerly was, should stand or fall by that test, and I do not fear to approach with her the seat of judgment. I am prepared to show that her history is full of poetry of the highest order and of the most varied nature. I have studied the subject *con amore*, and with such reverential enthusiasm, and I may say with such filial piety, that it has grown upon my heart as well as upon my mind. May I be able to do justice to its merits, and to raise within you a corresponding interest to that which I feel! To support the assertion that the history of Louisiana is eminently poetical, it will be sufficient to give you short graphical descriptions of those interesting events which constitute her annals. Bright gems they are, encircling her brows, diadem-like, and worthy of that star which has sprung from her forehead to enrich the American constellation in the firmament of liberty.

Three centuries have hardly elapsed, since that im-

mense territory which extends from the Gulf of Mexico to the Lakes of Canada, and which was subsequently known under the name of Louisiana, was slumbering in its cradle of wilderness, unknown to any of the white race to which we belong. Man was there, however, but man in his primitive state, claiming as it were, in appearance at least, a different origin from ours, or being at best a variety of our species. There, was the hereditary domain of the red man, living in scattered tribes over that magnificent country. Those tribes earned their precarious subsistence chiefly by pursuing the inhabitants of the earth and of the water; they sheltered themselves in miserable huts, spoke different languages, observed contradictory customs, and waged fierce war upon each other. Whence they came none knew; none knows, with absolute certainty, to the present day; and the faint glimmerings of vague traditions have afforded little or no light to penetrate into the darkness of their mysterious origin. Thus a wide field is left open to those dreamy speculations of which the imagination is so fond.

Whence came the Natchez, those worshipers of the sun with eastern rites? How is it that Grecian figures and letters are represented on the earthen wares of some of those Indian nations? Is there any truth in the supposition that some of those savages whose complexion approximates most to ours, draw their blood from that Welsh colony which is said to have found a home in America, many centuries since? Is it possible that Phœnician adventurers were the pilgrim fathers of some of the aborigines of Louisiana? What copper-colored swarm first issued from Asia, the revered womb of mankind, to wend its untraced way to the untenanted continent of America? What fanciful tales could be weaved on the powerful Choctaws, or the undaunted

Chickasaws, or the unconquerable Mobilians? There the imagination may riot in the poetry of mysterious migrations, of human transformations; in the poetry of the forests, of the valleys, of the mountains, of the lakes and rivers, as they came fresh and glorious from the hand of the Creator, in the poetry of barbaric manners, laws, and wars. What heroic poems might not a future Ossian devise on the red monarchs of old Louisiana! Would not their strange history, in the hands of a Tacitus, be as interesting as that of the ancient barbarian tribes of Germany, described by his immortal pen? Is there in that period of their existence which precedes their acquaintance with the sons of Europe, nothing which, when placed in contrast with their future fate, appeals to the imagination of the moralist, of the philosopher, and of the divine? Who, without feeling his whole soul glowing with poetical emotions, could sit under yonder gigantic oak, the growth of a thousand years, on the top of that hill of shells, the sepulcher of man, piled up by his hands, and overlooking that placid lake where all would be repose, if it were not for that solitary canoe, a moving speck, hardly visible in the distance, did it not happen to be set in bold relief, by being on that very line where the lake meets the horizon, blazing with the last glories of the departing sun? Is not this the very poetry of landscape, of Louisianian landscape?

When diving into the mysteries of the creation of that part of the south-western world which was once comprehended in the limits of Louisiana, will not the geologist himself pause, absorbed in astonishment at the number of centuries which must have been necessary to form the delta of the Mississippi? When he discovers successive strata of forests lying many fathoms deep on the top of each other; when he witnesses the

exhumation of the fossil bones of mammoths, elephants, or huge animals of the antediluvian race; when he reads the hieroglyphic records of Nature's wonderful doings, left by herself on the very rocks, or other granite and calcareous tablets of this country, will he not clasp his hands in ecstasy, and exclaim, "Oh! the dryness of my study has fled; there is poetry in the very foundation of this extraordinary land!"

Thus I think that I have shown that the spirit of poetry was moving over the face of Louisiana, even in her primitive state, and still pervades her natural history. But I have dwelt enough on Louisiana in the dark ages of her existence, of which we can know nothing, save by vague traditions of the Indians. Let us approach those times where her historical records begin to assume some distinct shape.

On the 31st of May, 1539, the bay of Santo Spiritu, in Florida, presented a curious spectacle. Eleven vessels of quaint shape, bearing the broad banner of Spain, were moored close to the shore; one thousand men of infantry, and three hundred and fifty men of cavalry, fully equipped, were landing in proud array under the command of Hernando De Soto, one of the most illustrious companions of Pizarro in the conquest of Peru, and reputed one of the best lances of Spain! "When he led in the van of battle, so powerful was his charge," says the old chronicler of his exploits, "so broad was the bloody passage which he carved out in the ranks of the enemy, that ten of his men-at-arms could with ease follow him abreast." He had acquired enormous wealth in Peru, and might have rested satisfied, a knight of renown, in the government of St. Jago de Cuba, in the sweet enjoyment of youth and of power, basking in the smiles of his beautiful wife, Isabella de Bobadilla. But his adventurous mind scorns such inglorious repose,

and now he stands erect and full of visions bright, on the sandy shore of Florida, whither he comes, with feudal pride, by leave of the king, to establish nothing less than a marquisate, ninety miles long by forty-five miles wide, and there to rule supreme, a governor for life, of all the territory that he can subjugate. Not unmindful he, the Christian knight, the hater and conqueror of Moorish infidelity, of the souls of his future vassals; for, twenty-two ecclesiastics accompany him to preach the word of God. Among his followers are gentlemen of the best blood of Spain and of Portugal: Don Juan de Guzman; Pedro Calderon, who, by his combined skill and bravery, had won the praises of Gonzalvo de Cordova, viceroy "the great captain;" Vasconcellos de Silva, of Portugal, who for birth and courage knew no superior; Nuno Tobar, a knight above fear and reproach; and Muscoso de Alvarado, whom that small host of heroes ranked in their estimation next to De Soto himself. But I stop an enumeration which, if I did justice to all, would be too long.

What materials for romance! Here is chivalry, with all its glittering pomp, its soul-stirring aspirations, in full march, with its iron heels and gilded spurs, toward the unknown and hitherto unexplored soil of Louisiana. In sooth, it must have been a splendid sight! Let us look at the glorious pageantry as it sweeps by, through the long vistas of those pine woods! How nobly they bear themselves, those bronzed sons of Spain, clad in refulgent armor! How brave that music sounds! How fleet they move, those Andalusian chargers, with arched necks and dilated nostrils! But the whole train suddenly halts in that verdant valley, by that bubbling stream, shaded by those venerable oaks with gray moss hanging from their branches in



imitation of the whitening beard of age. Does not the whole encampment rise distinct upon your minds?

The tents with gay pennons, with armorial bearings; the proud steed whose impatient foot spurns the ground; those men stretched on the velvet grass and recruiting their wearied strength by sleep; some singing old Castilian or Moorish roundelays; others musing on the sweet rulers of their souls, left in their distant home; a few kneeling before the officiating priest, at the altar which a moment sufficed for their pious ardor to erect, under yonder secluded bower; some burnishing their arms, others engaged in mimic warfare and trials of skill or strength; De Soto sitting apart with his peers in rank if not in command, and intent upon developing to them his plans of conquest, while the dusky faces of some Indian boys and women in the background express wild astonishment. None of the warriors of that race are to be seen; they are reported to be absent on a distant hunting excursion. But, methinks that at times I spy through the neighboring thickets the fierce glance of more than one eye, sparkling with the suppressed fury of anticipated revenge. What a scene! and would it not afford delight to the poet's imagination or to the painter's eye?

In two ponderous volumes, the historian Garcillasso relates the thousand incidents of that romantic expedition. What more interesting than the reception of Soto at the court of the Princess Cofachiqui, the Dido of the wilderness! What battles, what victories over men, over the elements themselves, and over the endless obstacles thrown out by rebellious nature! What incredible physical difficulties overcome by the advancing host! How heroic is the resistance of the Mobilians and of the Alabamas! With what headlong fury those denizens of the forest rush upon the iron-clad

warriors, and dare the thunders of those whom they take to be the children of the sun! How splendidly described is the siege of Mobile, where women fought like men, and wrapped themselves up in the flames of their destroyed city rather than surrender to their invaders!

But let the conquering hero beware! Now he is encamped on the territory of the Chickasaws, the most ferocious of the Indian tribes. And lucky was it that Soto was as prudent as he was brave, and slept equally prepared for the defence and for the attack. Hark! in the dead of a winter's night, when the cold wind of the north, in the month of January, 1541, was howling through the leafless trees, a simultaneous howl was heard, more hideous far than the voice of the tempest. The Indians rush impetuous, with firebrands, and the thatched roofs which sheltered the Spaniards are soon on fire, threatening them with immediate destruction. The horses rearing and plunging in wild affright, and breaking loose from their ligaments; the undaunted Spaniards, half naked, struggling against the devouring element and the unsparing foe; the desperate deeds of valor executed by Soto and his companions; the deep-toned shouts of St. Jago and Spain to the rescue; the demon-like shrieks of the red warriors; the final overthrow of the Indians; the hot pursuit by the light of the flaming village;—form a picture highly exciting to the imagination, and cold indeed must he be who does not take delight in the strange contrast of the heroic warfare of chivalry on one side, and of the untutored courage of man in his savage state, on the other.

It would be too long to follow Soto in his peregrinations during two years, through part of Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. At last he stands on the banks of the Mississippi, near the spot where now

flourishes the Egyptian-named city of Memphis. He crosses the mighty river, and onward he goes, up to the White River, while roaming over the territory of the Arkansas. Meeting with alternate hospitality and hostility on the part of the Indians, he arrives at the mouth of the Red River, within the present limits of the State of Louisiana. There he was fated to close his adventurous career.

Three years of intense bodily fatigue and mental excitement had undermined the hero's constitution. Alas! well might the spirit droop within him! He had landed on the shore of the North American continent with high hopes, dreaming of conquest over wealthy nations and magnificent cities. What had he met? Interminable forests, endless lagoons, inextricable marshes, sharp and continual conflicts with men little superior, in his estimation, to the brutish creation. He who in Spain was cheered by beauty's glance, by the songs of the minstrel, when he sped to the contest with adversaries worthy of his prowess, with the noble and chivalric Moors; he who had reveled in the halls of the imperial Incas of Peru, and who there had amassed princely wealth; he, the flower of knightly courts, had been roaming like a vagrant over an immense territory, where he had discovered none but half-naked savages, dwelling in miserable huts, ignobly repulsive when compared with Castile's stately domes, with Granada's fantastic palaces, and with Peru's imperial dwellings, massive with gold! His wealth was gone, two thirds of his brave companions were dead. What account of them would he render to their noble families! He, the bankrupt in fame and in fortune, how would he withstand the gibes of envy! Thought, that scourge of life, that inward consumer of man, racks his brain, his heart is seared with deep anguish; a slow fever

wastes his powerful frame, and he sinks at last on the couch of sickness, never to rise again. The Spaniards cluster round him, and alternately look with despair at their dying chieftain, and at the ominous hue of the bloody river, known at this day under the name of the Red River. But not he the man to allow the wild havoc within the soul to betray itself in the outward mien; not he, in common with the vulgar herd, the man to utter one word of wail! With smiling lips and serene brow he cheers his companions and summons them, one by one, to swear allegiance in his hands to Muscoso de Alvarado, whom he designates as his successor. "Union and perseverance, my friends," he says; "so long as the breath of life animates your bodies, do not falter in the enterprise you have undertaken. Spain expects a richer harvest of glory and more ample domains from her children." These are his last words, and then he dies. Blest be the soul of the noble knight and of the true Christian! Rest his mortal remains in peace within that oaken trunk scooped by his companions, and by them sunk many fathoms deep in the bed of the Mississippi!

The Spaniards, at first, had tried to conceal the death of Soto from the Indians, because they felt that there was protection in the belief of his existence. What mockery it was to their grief, to simulate joy on the very tomb of their beloved chief, whom they had buried in their camp before seeking for him a safer place of repose! But when, the slaves of hard necessity, they were, with heavy hearts but smiling faces, coursing in tournament over the burial-ground, and profaning the consecrated spot, the more effectually to mislead the conjectures of the Indians, they saw that their subterfuge was vain, and that the red men, with significant glances, were pointing to each other the

precise spot where the great white warrior slept. How dolorously does Garcillasso describe the exhumation and the plunging of the body into the turbid stream of the Great Father of Rivers !

Then comes an Odyssey of woes. The attempt of the Spaniards to go by land to Mexico ; their wandering as far as the Rio Grande and the mountainous region which lies between Mexico and Texas, and which was destined, in after years, to be so famous in American history ; their return to the mouth of Red River ; their building of vessels capable of navigating at sea ; the tender compassion and affectionate assistance of the good Cazique Anilco ; the league of the other Indian princes, far and wide, under the auspices of the great king, Quigualtanqui, the Agamemnon of the confederacy ; the discovery of the plot ; the retreat of all the Indian chiefs save the indomitable Quigualtanqui ; the fleet of one thousand canoes, mounted by twenty thousand men, with which he pursued the weary and despairing Spaniards for seventeen long days, assailing them with incessant fury ; the giving up of the chase only when the sea was nearly in sight ; the fierce parting words of the Indians to the Spaniards : " Tell your countrymen that you have been pursued by Quigualtanqui alone ; if he had been better assisted by his peers, none of you would have survived to tell the tale ; " the solemn rites with which, in their thousand canoes riveted on the water, they, on the day they ceased their pursuit, adored the rising sun and saluted him with their thanksgivings for the expulsion of the invaders ; the hair-breadth escapes of the three hundred Spaniards who alone out of the bright host of their former companions had succeeded in fleeing from the hostile shore of Louisiana ; their toils during a navigation of ninety days to the port of Panuco, where they

at last arrived in a state of utter destitution, are all thrilling incidents connected with the history of Louisiana, and replete with the very essence of poetry.

When Alvarado, the Ulysses of that expedition, related his adventures in the halls of Montezuma, Don Francisco de Mendoza, the son of the viceroy, broke out with passionate admiration of the conduct of Quigualtanqui: "A noble barbarian," exclaimed he, "an honest man and a true patriot." This remark, worthy of the high lineage and of the ancestral fame of him who spoke it, is a just tribute to the Louisianian chief, and is an apt epilogue to the recital of those romantic achievements, the nature of which is such, that the poet's pen would be more at ease with it than that of the historian.

One hundred and thirty years had passed away since the apparition of Soto on the soil of Louisiana, without any further attempt of the white race to penetrate into that fair region, when on the 7th of July, 1673, a small band of Europeans and Canadians reached the Mississippi, which they had come to seek from the distant city of Quebec. That band had two leaders, Father Marquette, a monk, and Joliet, a merchant, the prototypes of two great sources of power, religion and commerce, which, in the course of time, were destined to exercise such influence on the civilization of the western territory, traversed by the mighty river which they had discovered. They could not be ordinary men those adventurers, who in those days undertook to expose themselves to the fatigues and perils of a journey through unknown solitudes, from the St. Lawrence to the Mississippi! That humble monkish gown of Father Marquette concealed a hero's heart; and in the merchant's breast there dwelt a soul that would have disgraced no belted knight.

Whether it was owing to the peaceful garb in which they had presented themselves, or to some other cause, the Indians hardly showed any of that hostility which they had exhibited toward the armed invasion of Spain. Joliet and Father Marquette floated down the river without much impediment, as far as the Arkansas. There, having received sufficient evidence that the Mississippi discharged itself into the Gulf of Mexico, they retraced their way back and returned to Canada. But in that frail bark drifting down the current of the Mississippi, and in which sat the hard plodding merchant, with the deep wrinkles of thought and forecast on his brow, planning schemes of trade with unknown nations, and surveying with curious eye that boundless territory which seemed, as he went along, to stretch in commensurate proportion with the infiniteness of space; in that frail bark, I say, where mused over his breviary that gray-headed monk, leaning on that long staff, surmounted with the silver cross of Christ, and computing the souls that he had saved and still hoped to save from idolatry, is there not as much poetry as in the famed vessel of Argos, sailing in quest of the golden fleece? Were not their hearts as brave as those of the Greek adventurers? were not their dangers as great? and was not the object which they had in view much superior?

The grandeur of their enterprise was, even at that time, fully appreciated. On their return to Quebec, and on their giving information that they had discovered that mighty river of which the Europeans had but a vague knowledge conveyed to them by the Indians, and which, from the accounts given of its width and length, was considered to be one of the greatest wonders of the world, universal admiration was expressed; the bells of the Cathedral tolled merrily for a



whole day, and the bishop, followed by his clergy and the whole population, sang a solemn Te Deum at the foot of the altar. Thus, on the first acquaintance of our European fathers with the great valley of the Mississippi, of which our present State of Louisiana is the heart, there was an instinct that told them it was *there* that the seeds of empire and greatness were sown. Were they not right in those divinations which pushed them onward to that favored spot through so many obstacles? Greatness and empire were *there*, and therefore all the future elements of poetry.

Joliet and Marquette were dead, and nothing yet had been done to take possession of the newly discovered regions of the West; but the impetus was given; the march of civilization once begun could not retrograde; that mighty traveler, with religion for his guide, was pushed onward by the hand of God; and the same spirit which had driven the crusaders to Asia, now turned the attention of Europe to the continent of America. The spell which had concealed the Mississippi amid hitherto impenetrable forests, and, as it were, an ocean of trees, was broken; and the Indians, who claimed its banks as their hereditary domain, were now fated to witness the rapid succession of irresistible intruders.

Seven years since the expedition of Marquette and Joliet had rolled by, when Robert Cavalier de La Salle, in the month of January, 1682, feasted his eyes with the sight of the far-famed Mississippi. For his companions he had forty soldiers, three monks, and the Chevalier de Tonti. He had received the education of a Jesuit, and had been destined to the cloister, and to become a tutor of children in a seminary of that celebrated order of which he was to become a member. But he had that will, and those passions, and that in-



telle which can not be forced into a contracted channel of action. Born poor and a plebeian, he wished to be both noble and rich; obscure, he longed to be famous. Why not? Man shapes his own destinies when the fortitude of the soul corresponds with the vigorous organization of the mind. When the heart dares prompt the execution of what genius conceives, nothing remains but to choose the field of success. That choice was soon made by La Salle. America was then exercising magnetic attraction upon all bold spirits, and did not fail to have the same influence on his own. Obeying the impulse of his ambition, he crossed the Atlantic without hesitation, and landed in Canada in 1673.

When on the continent of America, that fond object of his dreams, La Salle felt that he was in a congenial atmosphere with his temperament. His mind seemed to expand, his conceptions to become more vivid, his natural eloquence to be gifted with more persuasion, and he was acknowledged at once by all who saw and heard him, to be a superior being. Brought into contact with Count Frontenac, who was the governor of Canada, he communicated to him his views and projects for the aggrandizement of France, and suggested to him the gigantic plan of connecting the St. Lawrence with the Mississippi by an uninterrupted chain of forts. "From the information which I have been able to collect," said he to the Count, "I think I may affirm that the Mississippi draws its source somewhere in the vicinity of the Celestial Empire, and that France will be not only the mistress of all the territory between the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi, but will command the trade of China, flowing down the new and mighty channel which I shall open to the Gulf of Mexico." Count Frontenac was seduced by the magnificence of the prospect sketched by the enthusiast, but not daring

to incur the expenses which such an undertaking would have required, referred him to the court of France.

To France, then, the adventurer returns with increased confidence; for he had secured one thing, he had gained one point; introduction to the noble and to the wealthy under the auspices of Count Frontenac. The spirit of Columbus was in him, and nothing abashed he would have forced his way to the foot of the throne and appealed to Majesty itself, with that assurance which genius imparts. But sufficient was it for him to gain the good graces of one of the royal blood of France, the Prince de Conti. He fired the prince's mind with his own contagious enthusiasm, and through him obtained from the king not only an immense concession of land, but was clothed with all the powers and privileges which he required for trading with the Indians, and for carrying on his meditated plans of discovery. Nay, more, he was ennobled by letters-patent, and thus one of the most ardent wishes of his heart was gratified. At last, he was no longer a plebeian, and with Macbeth he could exclaim, "Now,thane of Cawdor, the greatest is behind."

La Salle re-crossed the Atlantic with one worthy of being his *fidus Achates*, and capable of understanding the workings of his mind and of his heart. That man was the Chevalier De Tonti, who, as an officer, had served with distinction in many a war, and who afterward became famous among the Indians for the iron hand with which he had artificially supplied the one which he had lost.

On the 15th of September, 1678, proud and erect with the consciousness of success, La Salle stood again in the walls of Quebec; and stimulated by the cheers of the whole population, he immediately entered into the execution of his projects. Four years after, in

1682, he was at the mouth of the Mississippi, and in the name (as appears by a notarial act still extant) of the *most puissant, most high, most invincible and victorious Prince*, Louis the Great, King of France, took possession of all the country which he had discovered. How his heart must have swelled with exultation. when he stood at the mouth of the great river on which all his hopes had centered; when he unfurled the white banner and erected the stately column to which he appended the royal escutcheon of France, amid the shouts of his companions and the discharge of fire-arms! With what devotion he must have joined in the solemn *Te Deum* sung on that memorable occasion!

To relate all the heart-thrilling adventures which occurred to La Salle during the four years which elapsed between the opening and the conclusion of that expedition, would be to go beyond the limits which are allotted to me. Suffice it to say, that at this day to overcome the one-hundredth part of the difficulties which he had to encounter, would immortalize a man. If it be true that man is never greater than when engaged in a generous and unyielding struggle against dangers and adversity, then must it be admitted that during those four years of trials La Salle was pre-eminently great. Was he not worthy of admiration, when to the camp of the Iroquois, who at first had received him like friends, but had been converted into foes, he dared to go alone, to meet the charges brought against him by the subtle Mansolia, whose words were so persuasive, and whose wisdom appeared so wonderful, that it was attributed to his holding intercourse with spirits of another world? How interesting the spectacle! How vividly it pictures itself to my mind! How it would grace the pages of a Fenimore Cooper, or of one having the magic pen of a Walter Scott! Me-

thinks I see that areopagus of stern old Indian warriors listening with knit brows and compressed lips to the passionate accusation so skillfully urged against La Salle, and to the prediction that amity to the white race was the sure forerunner of destruction to all the Indian tribes. La Salle rose in his turn; how eloquent, how pathetic he was when appealing to the better feelings of the Indians, and how deserving of the verdict rendered in his favor!

The enmity, the ambushes of Indians were not to him the only sources of danger. *These* he could have stood unmoved! But what must have been his feelings when he became conscious of the poison which had been administered to him by some of his companions, who thought that, by destroying him, they would spare to themselves the anticipated horrors of an expedition which they no longer had the courage to prosecute! What his despair was, is attested by the name of "*Creve Cœur*," which he gave to a fort he built a short time after—the fort of the "Broken Heart!" But let us turn from his miseries to the more grateful spectacle of his ovation.

In 1684 he returned to France, and found himself famous. He, the poor boy, the ignoble by birth, for whom paternal tenderness had dreamed nothing higher than the honor of being a teacher in a seminary of Jesuits, was presented to Louis XIV. amid all the splendors of his court! That Jupiter among the kings of the earth had a smile to bestow upon the humble subject who came to deposit at the foot of the throne the title-deeds of such broad domains. But that smile of royalty was destined to be the last smile of fortune. The favors which he then obtained bred nothing but reverses. Every thing, however, wore a bright aspect,


and the star of his destiny appeared to be culminating in the heavens.

Thus a fleet, composed of four vessels, was put at his disposal, with all the materials necessary to establish a colony, and once more he left the shores of his native country, but this time invested with high command, and hoping perhaps to be the founder of an empire. This, indeed, was something worth having struggled for! But alas! he had struggled in vain; the meshes of adverse fate were drawing close around him. *Here* is not the place to relate his misunderstandings, degenerating into bitter quarrels with the proud Beaujeu, who had the subordinate command of the fleet, and who thought himself dishonored—he, the old captain of thirty years' standing, he, the nobleman—by being placed under the control of the unprofessional, of the plebeian, of him whom he called a pedagogue, fit only to rule over children. The result of that conflict was, that La Salle found himself abandoned on the shores of the Bay of St. Bernard, in 1685, and was reduced to shift for himself, with very limited resources. Here follows a period of three other years of great sufferings and of bold and incessant wanderings through the territory of the present State of Texas, where, after a long series of adventures, he was basely murdered by his French companions, and revenged by his body-servant, an Englishman by birth. He died somewhere about the spot where now stands the town of Washington, which owes its foundation to some of that race to which belonged his avenger, and the star-spangled banner now proudly waves where the first pioneer of civilization consecrated with his blood the future land of liberty.

The rapid sketch which I have given shows, that so much of La Salle's life as belongs to history occupies a space of fifteen years, and is so full of incidents as

to afford materials enough for the production of a voluminous and interesting book. But I think I may safely close my observations with the remark, that he who will write the life of that extraordinary man, however austere his turn of mind may be, will hardly be able to prevent the golden hues of poetry from overspreading the pages which he may pen, where history is so much like romance that, in many respects, it is likely to be classed as such by posterity.

Here I must close this historical sketch ; here I must stop, on the threshold of the edifice through which I should like to wander with you, in order to call your attention not only to the general splendor, but to the minute perfection of its architecture. Perhaps, at a future period, if your desire should keep pace with my inclination, I may resume the subject ; and I believe it will then be easy for me to complete the demonstration that our annals constitute a rich mine, where lies in profusion the purest ore of poetry, not to be found in broken and scattered fragments, but forming an uninterrupted vein through the whole history of Louisiana, in all its varied phases, from the primitive settlement made at Biloxi to the present time, when she wears the diadem of sovereignty, and when, with her blood and treasure, and with a spirit of chivalry worthy of her Spanish and French descent, and of her Anglo-Saxon adoption, she was the first to engage in the support of that war which, so glorious in its beginning at Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, Monterey, and Buena Vista, will undoubtedly have an equally glorious, and I think I may add, a poetical termination in the walls of Mexico !



## SECOND LECTURE.

ARRIVAL OF IBERVILLE AND BIENVILLE—SETTLEMENT OF A FRENCH COLONY IN LOUISIANA—SAUVOLLE, FIRST GOVERNOR—EVENTS AND CHARACTERS IN LOUISIANA, OR CONNECTED WITH THAT COLONY, FROM LA SALLE'S DEATH, IN 1687, TO 1701.

I CLOSED my last Lecture with La Salle's death, in 1687. A few years after, in the latter part of the same century, a French ship of 42 guns, on one of those beautiful days which are the peculiar offspring of the autumnal climate of America, happened to be coasting the hostile shore of New England. At that time England and France were at war, and the bays and harbors of the British possessions were swarming with the floating battlements of the mistress of the sea. Nevertheless, from the careless manner in which that ship, which bore the white flag of France, hugged the coast, one would have thought that no danger was to be apprehended from such close proximity to captivity or death. Suddenly, three vessels hove in sight; it was not long before their broad canvas wings seemed to spread wider, and their velocity to increase. To the most unpracticed eye it would have been evident that they were in pursuit of an object which they longed to reach. Yet, *they of the white flag* appeared to be unconscious of the intention of their fellow-travelers on the boundless desert of the ocean. Although the French ship, with her long masts, towering like steeples, could have borne much more canvas; although the

breeze blew fresh, and the circumstance might have invited to rapidity of motion, yet not one additional inch of sail did she show, but she continued to move with a speed, neither relaxed nor increased, and as if enjoying a holyday excursion on Old Neptune's domains,

High on the quarter-deck stood the captain, with the spy-glass in his hands, and surrounded by his officers. After a minute survey of the unknown vessels, as they appeared, with outlines faint and hardly visible from the distance, and with the tip of their masts gradually emerging, as it were, from the waves, he had dropped his glass, and said to the bystanders: "Gentlemen, they are vessels of war, and British." Then he instinctively cast a rapid glance upward at the rigging of his ship, as if to satisfy himself that nothing had happened *there*, to mar that symmetrical neatness and scientific arrangement which have ever been held to be a criterion of nautical knowledge, and therefore a proper source of professional pride. But the look which he flung at the deck was long and steady. That thoughtful, lingering look embraced every object, animate or inanimate, which there stood. Ay! that abstracted look and those compressed lips must have conveyed meaning, as distinct as if words had been spoken; for they produced instantaneous action, such action as when man prepares to meet man in deadly encounter. It was plain that between that chief and his crew there was that sympathetic congeniality which imparts thought and feeling without the use of language. It was plain that on all occasions when the soul was summoned into moral volition and stirred into the assumption of high and uncommon resolves, the same electric fluid, gushing from the heart, pervaded at once the whole of that human mass. But, if a change had



come over the outward appearance of that ship's deck, none had taken place in her upper trimming. The wind continued to fill the same number of sails, and the ship, naiad-like, to sport herself leisurely in her favorite element.

In the mean time, the vessels which had been descried at the farthest point of the horizon, had been rapidly gaining ground upon the intervening distance, and were dilating in size as they approached. It could be seen that they had separated from each other, and they appeared to be sweeping round the Pelican (for such was the name of the French ship), as if to cut her off from retreat. Already could be plainly discovered St. George's cross, flaunting in the wind. The white cloud of canvas that hung over them seemed to swell with every flying minute, and the wooden structures themselves, as they plunged madly over the furrowed plains of the Atlantic, looked not unlike Titanic race-horses pressing for the goal. Their very masts with their long flags streaming, like Gorgon's disheveled locks, seemed, as they bent under the wind, to be quivering with the anxiety of the chase. But, ye sons of Britain, why this hot haste? Why urge ye into such desperate exertions the watery steeds which ye spur on so fiercely? *They of the white flag* never thought of flight. See! they shorten sail as if to invite you to the approach. Beware ye do not repent of your efforts to cull the Lily of France, so temptingly floating in your sight! If ye be falcons of pure breed, yonder bird, that is resting his folded pinions and sharpening his beak, is no carrion crow. Who, but an eagle, would have looked with such imperturbable composure at your rapid gyrations, betokening the thunderbolt-like swoop which is to descend upon his devoted head?

Now, forsooth, the excitement of the looker-on must

be tenfold increased: now the four vessels are within gun-shot, and the fearful struggle is to begin. One is a British ship of the line, showing a row of 52 guns, and her companions are frigates armed with 42 guns each. To court such unequal contest, must not that French commander be the very impersonation of madness? There he stands on the quarter-deck, a man apparently thirty years of age, attired as if for a courtly ball, in the gorgeous dress of the time of Louis the Fourteenth. The profuse curls of his perfumed hair seem to be bursting from the large, slouched gray hat, which he wears on one side inclined, and decorated with a red plume horizontally stuck to the broad brim, according to the fashion of the day. What a noble face! If I were to sculpture a hero, verily, I would put such a head on his shoulders—nay, I would take the whole man for my model! I feel that I could shout with enthusiasm, when I see the peculiar expression which has settled in that man's eye, in front of such dangers thickening upon him! Ha! what is it? What signify that convulsive start which shook his frame, and that death-like paleness which has flitted across his face? What woman-like softness has suddenly crept into those eyes? By heaven! a tear! I saw it, although it passed as rapidly as if a whirlwind had swept it off, and although every feature has now resumed its former expression of more than human firmness.

I understand it all! That boy, so young, so effeminate, so delicate, but who, in an under-officer's dress, stands with such manly courage by one of the guns,—he is your brother, is he not? Perhaps he is doomed to death! and you think of his aged mother! Well may the loss of two such sons crush her at once! When I see such exquisite feelings tumultuously at work in a heart as soft as ever throbbed in a woman's breast;

when I see you, Iberville, resolved to sacrifice so much, rather than to fly from your country's enemies, even when it could be done without dishonor, stranger as you are to me, I wish I could stand by you on that deck and hug you to my bosom!

What awful silence on board of those ships! Were it not for the roar of the waves, as they are cleft by the gigantic bulks under which they groan, the chirping of a cricket might be distinctly heard. How near they are to each other! A musket shot would tell. Now, the crash is coming! The tempest of fire, havoc, and destruction is to be let loose! What a spectacle! I would not look twice at such a scene—it is too painful for an unconcerned spectator! My breast heaves with emotion—I am struggling in vain to breathe! Ha! there it goes—one simultaneous blaze! The eruption of Mount Vesuvius—a strange whizzing sound—the hissing of ten thousand serpents, bursting from hell and drunk with its venom—the fall of timber, as if a host of sturdy axes had been at work in the forest—a thick overspreading smoke concealing the demon's work within its dusky folds! With the occasional clearing of the smoke, the French ship may be seen, as if animated with a charmed life, gliding swiftly by her foes, and pouring in her broadsides with unabated rapidity. It looks like the condensation of all the lightnings of heaven. Her commander, as if gifted with supernatural powers and with the privilege of ubiquity, seems to be present at the same time in every part of the ship, animating and directing all with untiring ardor.

That storm of human warfare has lasted about two hours; but the French ship, salamander-like, seems to live safely in that atmosphere of fire. Two hours! I can stand this excitement no longer; and yet every minute is adding fresh fuel to its intensity. But

now comes the crisis. The Pelican has almost silenced the guns of the English 52, and is bearing down upon her evidently with the intention to board. But, strange! she veers round. Oh! I see. God of mercy! I feel faint at heart! The 52. is sinking—slowly she settles in the surging sea—there—there—there—down! What a yell of defiance! But it is the last. What a rushing of the waters over the ingulfed mass! Now all is over, and the yawning abyss has closed its lips.—What remains to be seen on that bloody theater? One of the English 42s, in a dismantled state, is dropping slowly at a distance under the wind, and the other has already struck its flag, and is lying motionless on the ocean, a floating ruin!

The French ship is hardly in a better plight, and the last rays of the setting sun show her deck strewn with the dead and the dying. But the glorious image of victory flits before the dimmed vision of the dying, and they expire with the smile of triumph on their lips, and with the exulting shout of "*France forever!*"

But where is the conqueror? Where is the gallant commander, whose success sounds like a fable? My heart longs to see him safe, and in the enjoyment of his well-earned glory. Ah! there he is, kneeling and crouching over the prostrate body of that stripling whom I have depicted: he addresses the most tender and passionate appeals to that senseless form; he covers with kisses that bloody head; he weeps and sobs aloud, unmindful of those that look on. In faith! I weep myself, to see the agony of that noble heart: and why should that hero blush to moan like a mother—he who showed more than human courage, when the occasion required fortitude? Weep on, Iberville, weep on! Well may such tears be gathered by an angel's wings, like dew-drops worthy of heaven, and, if carried by

supplicating mercy to the foot of the Almighty's throne, they may yet redeem thy brother's life!

Happily, that brother did not die. He was destined to be known in history under the name of Bienville, and to be the founder of one of America's proudest cities. To him New Orleans owes its existence, and his name, in the course of centuries, will grow in the esteem of posterity, proportionately with the aggrandizement of the future emporium of so many countless millions of human beings.

The wonderful achievement which I have related is a matter of historical record, and throws a halo of glory and romance around those two men, who have since figured so conspicuously in the annals of Louisiana, and who, in the beginning of March, 1699, entered the Mississippi, accompanied by Father Anastase, the former companion of La Salle in his expedition down the river in 1682.

Since the occurrence of that battle, of which I have given but an imperfect description, Iberville and Bienville had been through several campaigns at sea, and had encountered the dangers of many a fight. What a remarkable family! The father, a Canadian by birth, had died on the field of battle, in serving his country, and out of eleven sons, the worthy scions of such a stock, five had perished in the same cause. Out of the six that remained, five were to consecrate themselves to the establishment of a colony in Louisiana.

Before visiting the Mississippi, Iberville had left his fleet anchored at the Chandeleur Islands. This name proceeds from the circumstance of their having been discovered on the day when the Catholic Church celebrates the feast of the presentation of Christ in the temple, and of the purification of the Virgin. They are flat, sandy islands, which look as if they wish to sink

back into the sea, from shame of having come into the world prematurely, and before having been shaped and licked by nature into proper objects of existence. No doubt, they did not prepossess the first colonists in favor of what they were to expect. The French visited also *Ship Island*, so called from its appearing to be a safe roadstead for ships, but it offered to the visitors no greater attraction than the precedent. The next island they made had not a more inviting physiognomy. When they landed on that forbidding and ill-looking piece of land, they found it to be a small, squatting island, covered with indifferent wood, and intersected with lagoons. It literally swarmed with a curious kind of animal, which seemed to occupy the medium between the fox and the cat. It was difficult to say whether it belonged to one species in preference to the other. But one of the French having exclaimed, "*This is the kingdom of cats!*" decided the question, and the name of Cat Island was given to the new discovery. Here that peculiar animal, which was subsequently to be known in the United States under the popular name of racoon, formed a numerous and a contented tribe; here they lived like philosophers, separated from the rest of the world, and enjoying their nuts—their loaves and fishes. I invite fabulists, or those who have a turn for fairy tales, to inquire into the origin of that grimal-kin colony, and to endear Cat Island to the juvenility of our State, by reciting the marvelous doings of which it was the theater.

It was fraught, however, with so little interest in the estimation of the French, that they hastened to leave it for the land they had in sight. It formed a bay, the shores of which they found inhabited by a tribe of Indians, called Biloxi, who proved as hospitable as their name was euphonic.

On the 27th of February, 1699, Iberville and Bienville departed from Biloxi in search of the Mississippi. When they approached its mouth, they were struck with the gloomy magnificence of the sight. As far as the eye could reach, nothing was to be seen but reeds which rose five or six feet above the waters in which they bathed their roots. They waved mournfully under the blast of the sharp wind of the north, shivering in its icy grasp, as it tumbled, rolled, and gambled on the pliant surface. Multitudes of birds of strange appearance, with their elongated shapes, so lean that they looked like metamorphosed ghosts, clothed in plumage, screamed in the air, as if they were scared at each other. There was something agonizing in their shrieks, that was in harmony with the desolation of the place. On every side of the vessel, monsters of the deep and huge alligators heaved themselves up heavily from their native or favorite element, and, floating lazily on the turbid waters, seemed to gaze at the intruders. Down the river, and rumbling over its bed, there came a sort of low, distant thunder. Was it the voice of the hoary sire of rivers, raised in anger at the prospect of his gigantic volume of waters being suddenly absorbed by one mightier than he?—In their progress, it was with great difficulty that the travelers could keep their bark free from those enormous rafts of trees which the Mississippi seemed to toss about in mad frolic. A poet would have thought that the great river, when departing from the altitude of his birth-place, and as he rushed down to the sea through three thousand miles, had, in anticipation of a contest which threatened the continuation of his existence, flung his broad arms right and left across the continent, and uprooting all its forests, had hoarded them in his bed as



missiles to hurl at the head of his mighty rival, when they should meet and struggle for supremacy.

When night began to cast a darker hue on a landscape on which the imagination of Dante would have gloated, there issued from that chaos of reeds such uncouth and unnatural sounds, as would have saddened the gayest and appalled the most intrepid. Could this be the far-famed Mississippi? or was it not rather old Avernus? It was hideous indeed—but hideousness refined into sublimity, filling the soul with a sentiment of grandeur. Nothing daunted, the adventurers kept steadily on their course: they knew that, through those dismal portals, they were to arrive at the most magnificent country in the world; they knew that awful screen concealed loveliness itself. It was a coquettish freak of nature, when dealing with European curiosity, as it came eagerly bounding on the Atlantic wave, to herald it through an avenue so somber, as to cause the wonders of the great valley of the Mississippi to burst with tenfold more force upon the bewildered gaze of those who, by the endurance of so many perils and fatigues, were to merit admittance into its Eden.

It was a relief for the adventurers when, after having toiled up the river for ten days, they at last arrived at the village of the Bayagoulas. There they found a letter of Tonti to La Salle, dated in 1685. That letter, or rather that *speaking bark*, as the Indians called it, had been preserved with great reverence. Tonti having been informed that La Salle was coming with a fleet from France, to settle a colony on the banks of the Mississippi, had not hesitated to set off from the Northern Lakes, with twenty Canadians and thirty Indians, and to come down to the Balize to meet his friend, who, as we know, had failed to make out the mouth of the Mississippi, and had been landed by Beaujeu on the



shores of Texas. After having waited for some time, and ignorant of what had happened, Tonti, with the same indifference to fatigues and dangers of an appalling nature, retraced his way back, leaving a letter to La Salle to inform him of his disappointment. Is there not something extremely romantic in the characters of the men of that epoch? Here is Tonti undertaking, with the most heroic unconcern, a journey of nearly three thousand miles, through such difficulties as it is easy for us to imagine, and leaving a letter to La Salle, as a proof of his visit, in the same way that one would, in these degenerate days of effeminacy, leave a card at a neighbor's house.

The French extended their explorations up to the mouth of the Red River. As they proceeded through that virgin country, with what interest they must have examined every object that met their eyes, and listened to the traditions concerning Soto, and the more recent stories of the Indians on La Salle and the iron-handed Tonti!\* A coat of mail which was presented as having belonged to the Spaniards, and vestiges of their encampment on the Red River, confirmed the French in the belief that there was much of truth in the recitals of the Indians.

On their return from the mouth of the Red River, the two brothers separated when they arrived at Bayou Manchac. Bienville was ordered to go down the river to the French fleet, to give information of what they had seen and heard. Iberville went through Bayou Manchac to those lakes which are now known under the names of Pontchartrain and Maurepas. Louisiana had been named from a king: was it not in keeping that those lakes should be called after ministers?

\* He had lost one of his hands, which he had supplied by an artificial one made of iron.

It has been said that there is something in a name. If it be true, why should not I tell you who were those from whom the names of those lakes were borrowed? Is it not something even for inanimate objects to have historical names? It throws round them the spell of romance, and sets the imagination to work.

Louis Phelyppeaux, Count Pontchartrain, a minister and chancellor of France, was the grandson of a minister. He was a man remarkable for his talents and erudition. His integrity was proverbial, and his enlightened and inflexible administration of justice is found recorded in all the annals of the time. When he was appointed to the exalted office of Chancellor of France, Louis the XIVth, on administering to him the required oath, said, "Sir, I regret that it is not in my power to bestow upon you a higher office, as a proof of my esteem for your talents, and of my gratitude for your services."

Pontchartrain patronized letters with great zeal, and during his long career, was the avowed friend of Boileau and of J. B. Rousseau, the poet. He was of a very diminutive size, but very well shaped, and had that lean and hungry look which Cæsar did not like in Cassius. His face was one of the most expressive, and his eyes were lighted up with incessant scintillations, denoting the ebullitions of wit within. If his features promised a great deal, his mind did more than redeem the physical pledge. There is no question, however abstruse, which he did not understand as if by intuition, and his capacity for labor appeared to stretch as far as the limits allotted to human nature. He was constitutionally indefatigable in all his pursuits; and his knowledge of men, which was perhaps superior to all his other qualifications, remarkable as they were, greatly helped his iron will in the successful execution of its

conceptions. But, although he knew mankind thoroughly, he did not assume the garb of misanthropy. On the contrary, his manners spoke of a heart overflowing with the milk of human benevolence; and his conversation, which was alternately replete with deep learning, or sparkling with vivacity and repartee, was eagerly sought after. If, on matters of mere business, he astonished, by the clearness of his judgment and his rapidity of conception, those he had to deal with, he no less delighted those with whom he associated in his lighter hours, by his mild cheerfulness and by his colloquial powers, even on the veriest trifles. No man knew better than he, how to temper the high dignity of his station by the utmost suavity and simplicity of address. Yet in that man who, conscious of the misery he might inflict, was so guarded in his expressions that he never was betrayed into an unkind one—in that man, in whom so much blandness was allied to so much majesty of deportment—there was something more dreaded far than the keenest powers of sarcasm in others. It was a *smile*, peculiar to himself, which made people inquire with anxiety, not what Pontchartrain had said, but how Pontchartrain had smiled. That smile of his blasted like lightning what it was aimed at; it operated as a sentence of death, and did such execution that the Pontchartrain smile became, at the court of Louis the Fourteenth, as famous as the *Mortemart wit*.\* In 1714, resisting the entreaties of the king, he resigned his chancellorship, and retiring into the house of a religious congregation (Les prêtres de l'Oratoire) he devoted the remainder of his life to prayer, reading, and meditation.

\* The hereditary wit of all the members of that family, male or female, was marked with such peculiar pungency, that it became proverbial, and was called the Mortemart wit.

Jean Frederic Phelypeaux, Count Maurepas, was the son of Jerome Phelypeaux, a minister and secretary of state, and the grandson of Pontchartrain, the chancellor. At the age of fourteen, he was appointed secretary of state, and in 1725, in his twenty-fourth year, became minister. This remarkable family thus presented an uninterrupted succession of ministers for one hundred and seventy-one years. The obstinacy with which prosperity clung to her favorites appeared so strange that it worked upon the imagination of the superstitious, or of the ignorant, and was attributed at the time to some unholy compact and to the protection of supernatural beings. Cradled in the lap of power, Maurepas exhibited in his long career all the defects which are usually observed to grow with the growth of every spoiled child of fortune. He was as capricious as the wind, and as light as the feather with which it delights to gambol. The frivolity of his character was such that it could not be modified even by extreme old age. Superficial in every thing, he was incapable of giving any serious attention to such matters as would, from their very nature, command the deep consideration of most men. Perhaps he relied too much on his prodigious facility of perception, and on a mind so gifted, that it could, in an instant, unravel the knots of the most complicated affair. In the king's council, his profound knowledge of men and of the court, a sort of hereditary ministerial training to business, imperfect as it was, enabled him to conceal to a certain degree his lamentable deficiency of study and of meditation. As it were by instinct, if not by the diviner's rod, he could stamp on the ground and point out where the fruits of the earth lay concealed; but instead of using the spade and mattock in search of the treasure, he would run after the first butterfly that caught his eye. To

reconcile men to his imperfections, nature had given him a bewitching sweetness of temper, which was never found wanting. Urbane, supple, and insinuating in his manners, he was as pliant as a reed: fertile in courtly stratagems, expert in laying out traps, pitfalls, and ambuscades for his enemies, he was equally skillful in the art of attack and defense, and no Proteus could assume more varied shapes to elude the grasp of his adversaries. There was no wall to which he could be driven, where he could not find an aperture through which to make his escape. No hunted deer ever surpassed him in throwing out the intricate windings of his flight, to mislead his sagacious pursuers. Where he unexpectedly found himself stared in the face by some affair, the serious complexion of which he did not like, he would exorcise the apparition away by a profuse sprinkling of witty jests, calculated to lessen the importance of the hated object, or to divert from it the attention of persons interested in its examination. No Ulysses could be more replete than he with expedients to extricate himself out of all difficulties; but the moment he was out of danger, he would throw himself down, panting with his recent efforts, and think of nothing else than to luxuriate on the couch of repose, or to amuse himself with trifles.

Maurepas, in more than one respect, was made up of contrarieties, a living antithesis in flesh and blood, a strange compound of activity and indolence that puzzled the world. Upon the whole, he was generally thought to be, by superficial observers, a harmless, good-natured, easy sort of man. But withal, in spite of his habitual supineness, he could rival the lynx, when he applied the keenness of his eye to detect the weak, ridiculous, or contemptible parts in the formation of his fellow-beings: and no spider could weave such an impercept-

ible but certain web around those court flies he wanted to destroy, or to use to his own purposes. He was born a trifle, but one of a redoubtable nature, and from his temperament as well as from his vicious education, there was nothing so respected, so august, or even so awful, as not to be laughed or scoffed at by him. There was no merit, no virtue, no generous, no moral or religious belief or faith in any thing, that he would not deride, and he would sneer even at himself, or at his own family, with the same relish, when the mood came upon him. Yet, worthless as that man was in his private and public character, he had such a peculiar turn for throwing the rich glow of health around what was most rotten in the state; he could present to his master and to his colleagues the driest matter under such an enlivening aspect, when they met in the council-chamber; he could render apparently so simple what seemed so complicated as to require the most arduous labor; and he could solve the most difficult political problem with such ease, that it looked like magic, and made him the most fascinating of ministers.

For such a king as Louis the XVth, who felt with great sensitiveness any thing that disturbed the voluptuous tranquillity which was the sole object of his life, Maurepas, as a minister, had a most precious quality. Born in the atmosphere of the court, he was intimately acquainted with his native element, and excelled in hushing that low buzzing of discontent, so disagreeable to a monarch, which arises from the unsatisfied ambition, the jealousy, and the quarrels of his immediate attendants. None knew better than Maurepas the usages and secrets of the court, and how to reconcile the conflicting interests of those great families that gravitate round the throne. He knew exactly what was due to every one, either for personal merit or for

ancestral distinction. His was the art to nip in the bud all factions or cabals, to stifle the grumblings of discontent, or to lull the murmurs of offended pride. He knew how to make the grant of a favor doubly precious by the manner in which it was offered; and the bitterness of refusal was either sweetened by assurances of regret and of personal devotion, or by a happy mixture of reasoning and pleasantry, which, if it did not convince the mind, forced disappointment itself to smile at its own bad luck.

With all his faults, such a minister had too much innate talent not to do some good, in spite of his frivolity. Thus, he made great improvements and embellishments in the city of Paris; he infused new life into the marine department, corrected many abuses, visited all the harbors and arsenals, sent officers to survey all the coasts of France, had new maps made, established nautical schools, and ordered the expeditions of learned men to several parts of the world. Geometers and astronomers, according to his instructions, went to the equator and near the boreal pole, to measure, at the same time and by a concurrent operation, two degrees of the meridian. Thus, La Condamine, Bouguer, Godin, Maupertuis, Clairaut, and Lemonnier, were indebted to him for their celebrity. Also, in obedience to his commands, Sevin and Fourmont visited Greece and several provinces of the East; others surveyed Mesopotamia and Persia, and Jussieu departed to study the botany of Peru.

That frivolous minister did, through his strong natural sagacity, partially discover that commerce ought to be unshackled, and withdrew from the India Company the monopoly of the coffee trade and of the slave trade. By such a wise measure, he largely contributed to the prosperity of the French colonies. But, in such an ele-



vated region of thought, conception, and action, Maurepas was too boyish to remain long. He would confide the labors of his office to those whom it was his duty to guide, and would steal away to the balls of the opera, or to every sort of dissipation. If he remained in the cabinet destined to his official occupations, it was not to think and to act in a manner worthy of the minister, but to write lampoons, scurrilous drolleries, and facetious obscenities. He took a share in the composition of several licentious pieces, well suited to the taste and morals of the time, and contributed to one which attracted some attention, under the title of *The Ballet of the Turks*. These things were not, for him, the result of a momentary debauch of the mind, but matters of serious occupation and pursuit. Such a relish did he find in this pastime, which would be called childish if it had not been tainted with immorality, that it took the mastery over his prudence, and he had the indiscretion to write a lampoon on the physical charms of the Marquise de Pompadour, the acknowledged favorite of Louis the XVth. The pruriency of his wit cost him his place, and in 1749, after having been a minister twenty-four years, he was exiled to the city of Bourges, and afterward permitted to reside at his *Chateau de Pontchartrain*, near Paris. There, his princely fortune allowed him to live in splendor, and to attach a sort of mimic court to his person. He appeared to bear his fall with philosophical indifference, observing that, *on the first day of his dismissal, he felt sore; but that on the next, he was entirely consoled.*

On the death of Louis the XVth, his successor sent for Maurepas, to put him at the helm of that royal ship, destined soon to be dashed to pieces in that tremendous storm which might be seen gathering from the four quarters of the horizon. The unfortunate Louis could



not have made a poorer choice. Maurepas had sagacity enough to discover the coming events, but he was not the man, even if the power had been in his hands, to prepare for the struggle with those gigantic evils, whose shadow he could see already darkening the face of his country. Such an attempt would have interfered with his delightful suppers and disturbed his sleep; and to the Cassandras of that epoch, the egotistical old man used to reply with a sneer and a shrug of his shoulders, "The present organization of things will last as long as I shall, and why should I look beyond!" This observation was in keeping with the whole tenor of his life; and, true to the system which he had adopted, if he lived and died in peace, what did he care for the rest? He had no children, and when he married in all the vigor of youth, those who knew him intimately, predicted that the bridal bed would remain barren. The prediction proved true, and had not required any extraordinary powers of divination. Is it astonishing that the lineal descendant of a succession of ministers should be without virility of mind, soul, or body? What herculean strength, what angel purity would have resisted the deleterious influence of such an atmosphere, working, for nearly two centuries, slow but sure mischief, from generation to generation?

After having been a minister for six years under Louis the XVIth, Maurepas died in 1781. So infatuated was the king with his octogenarian minister, that he had insisted upon his occupying, at the Palace of Versailles, an apartment above his own royal chamber; and every morning, the first thing that the king did, was to pay a visit to the minister. Pleasant those visits were, because the wily old minister presented every thing to his young master under the most glowing colors, and made him believe that his almost centenarian

experience would smooth the rugged path that extended before him. If parliaments rebelled, if fleets were defeated, if provinces were famished, Maurepas had no unpalatable truths to say. Only once, the eaves-droppers heard his voice raised above its usual soft tone. What frightful convulsion of nature could have produced such a change? None but the death of a cat! Distracted with the shrieks of his wife, whose troublesome four-footed favorite, interfering with the king when engaged in his darling occupation of a blacksmith, had been killed by an angry blow of the royal hammer, he loudly expostulated with the murderer for the atrociousness of the deed. What must have been his dread of his wife, when under the cabalistic influence of her frowns, such a courtier could so completely drop the prudential policy of his whole life, as to venture to show displeasure to the king!

When Maurepas died, the king shed tears, and said with a faltering voice, "Alas! in the morning, for the future, when I shall wake up, no longer shall I hear the grateful sound to which I was used—the slow pacing of my friend in the room above mine." Very little deserving of this testimonial of friendship was he, who never loved any thing in this world but himself.

So much for Pontchartrain and Maurepas, who have given their names to those beautiful lakes which are in the vicinity of New Orleans. From Lake Pontchartrain, Iberville arrived at a sheet of water which is known in our days under the name of Lake Borgne. The French, thinking that it did not answer precisely the definition of a lake, because it was not altogether land-locked, or did not at least discharge its waters only through a small aperture, and because it looked rather like a part of the sea, separated from its main body by numerous islands, called it Lake Borgne, meaning

something incomplete or defective, like a man with one eye.

On that lake, there is a beautiful bay, to which Iberville gave the patronymic name of St. Louis. Of a more lofty one no place can boast under the broad canopy of heaven.

Louis the IXth, son of Louis the VIIIth of France, and of Blanche of Castile, was the incarnation of virtue, and, what is more extraordinary, of virtue born on the throne, and preserving its divine purity in spite of all the temptations of royal power. In vain would history be taxed to produce a character worthy of being compared with one so pure. Among heroes, he must certainly be acknowledged as one of the greatest; among monarchs, he must be ranked as the most just; and among men, as the most modest. For such perfection, he was indebted to his mother, who, from his earliest days, used to repeat to him this solemn admonition: "My son, remember that I had rather see you dead than offending your God by the commission of a deadly sin." When he assumed the government of his kingdom, he showed that his talents for administration were equal to his virtues as a man. Every measure which he adopted during peace, had a happy tendency toward the moral and physical improvement of his subjects, and in war he proved that he was not deficient in those qualifications which constitute military genius. He defeated Henry the IIIrd of England at the battle of Taillebourg in Poitou, where he achieved prodigies of valor. He gained another decisive victory at Saintes over the English monarch, to whom he granted a truce of five years, on his paying to France five thousand pounds sterling.

Unfortunately, the piety of the king making him forgetful of what was due to the temporal welfare of

his subjects, drove him into one of those crusades, which the cold judgment of the statesman may blame, but at which the imagination of the lover of romance will certainly not repine. In 1249, Louis landed in Egypt, took the city of Damietta, and advanced as far as Massourah. But after several victories, whereby he lost the greater part of his army, he was reduced to shut himself up in his camp, where famine and pestilence so decimated the feeble remnant of his forces, that he was constrained to surrender to the host of enemies by whom he was enveloped. He might have escaped, however; but to those who advised him to consult his own personal safety, he gave this noble answer: "I must share in life or in death the fate of my companions."

The Sultan had offered to his prisoner to set him free, on condition that he would give up Damietta and pay one hundred thousand silver marks. Louis replied, that a king of France never ransomed himself for money; but that he would yield Damietta in exchange for his own person, and pay one hundred thousand silver marks in exchange for such of his subjects as were prisoners. Such was the course of negotiation between the two sovereigns, when it was suddenly arrested by the murder of the Sultan, who fell a victim to the unruly passions of his janizaries. They had rebelled against their master, for having attempted to subject them to a state of discipline irksome to their habits and humiliating to their lawless pride. Some of those ruffians penetrated into the prison of Louis, and one of them, presenting him with the gory head of the Sultan, asked the French monarch what reward he would grant him for the destruction of his enemy. A haughty look of contempt was the only answer vouchsafed by Louis. Enraged at this manifestation of dis-

pleasure, the assassin lifted up his dagger, and aiming it at the king's breast, exclaimed, "Dub me a knight, or die!" Louis replied with indignation, "Repent, and turn Christian, or fly hence, base infidel!" When uttering these words, Louis had risen from his seat, and with an arm loaded with chains had pointed to the door, waving the barbarian away with as much majesty of command as if he had been seated on his throne in his royal palace of the Louvre. Abashed at the rebuke, and overawed by the Olympian expression of the monarch's face, the Saracen skulked away, and said to his companions, when he returned to them, "I have just seen the proudest Christian that has yet come to the East!"

After many obstacles, a treaty of peace was at last concluded: Louis and his companions were liberated; the Saracens received from the French eight hundred thousand marks of silver, and recovered the city of Damietta. But they authorized Louis to take possession of all the places in Palestine which had been wrested from the Christians, and to fortify them as he pleased.

When the king landed in France, the joy of his subjects was such, that they appeared to be seized with the wildest delirium. On his way from the sea-coast to Paris, he was met by throngs of men, women, and children, who rushed at him with the most frantic shrieks, and kissed his feet and the hem of his garments, as if he had been an angel dropped from heaven to give them the assurance of eternal felicity. These testimonials of gratitude, extreme as they may appear, were not more than he deserved. He who used to say to his proud nobles, "Our serfs belong to Christ, our common master, and in a Christian kingdom it must not be forgotten that we are all brothers," must indeed

have been beloved by the people ! How could it be otherwise, when they saw him repeatedly visiting every part of his dominions, to listen to the complaints of his meanest subjects ! They knew that he used to sit, at Vincennes, under a favorite oak, which has become celebrated from that circumstance, and there loved, with august simplicity, to administer justice to high and low. It was there that he rendered judgment against his own brother, Le Comte d'Anjou ; it was there that he forced one of his most powerful barons, Enguerrand de Coucy, to bow to the majesty of the law. It was he whose enlightened piety knew how to check the unjust pretensions of his clergy, and to keep them within those bounds which they were so prone to overleap. It was he who contented himself with retorting to those who railed at his pious and laborious life, " If I gave to hunting, to gambling, to tournaments, and to every sort of dissipation, the moments which I devote to prayer and meditation, I should not be found fault with."

Louis undertook a second Crusade ; and having encamped on the site of old Carthage, prepared to commence the siege of Tunis, to which it is almost contiguous. There, privations of every sort, incessant fatigue, and the malignant influence of the climate, produced an epidemical disease, which rapidly destroyed the strength of his army. His most powerful barons and most skillful captains died in a few days ; his favorite son, the Count de Nevers, expired in his arms ; his eldest born, the presumptive heir to the crown, had been attacked by the pestilence, and was struggling against death, in a state of doubtful convalescence ; when, to increase the dismay of the French, Louis himself caught the infection. Aware of approaching death, he ordered himself to be stretched on ashes ; wishing, he, the great

king, to die with all the humility of a Christian. At the foot of his bed of ashes, stood a large cross, bearing the image of the crucified Savior, upon which he loved to rest his eyes, as on the pledge of his future salvation. Around him, the magnates of France and his own immediate attendants knelt on the ground, which they bathed with tears, and addressed to Heaven the most fervent prayers for the recovery of the precious life which was threatened with sudden extinguishment.

Out of the royal tent, grief was not less expressive. The silence of despair, made more solemn by occasional groans, reigned absolute over the suffering multitude that had agglomerated on the accursed Numidian shore; and the whole army, distracted, as it were, at the danger which menaced its august head, seemed to have been struck with palsy by the horror of its situation. The dying were hardly attended to, so much engrossed were their attendants by heavier cares; and even they, the dying, were satisfied to perish, since they thus escaped the bitterness of their present fate; and their loss elicited no expression of regret from their survivors, so much absorbed were they by the fear of a greater misfortune to them and to France. There appeared to be a sort of frightful harmony between the surrounding objects and the human sufferings to which they formed an appropriate frame. The winds seemed to have departed forever from the earth; the atmosphere had no breath; and the air almost condensed itself into something palpable; it fell like molten lead upon the lungs which it consumed. The motionless sea was smoothed and glassed into a mirror reflecting the heat of the lurid sun: it looked dead. Beasts of prey, hyenas, jackals, and wolves, attracted by the noxious effluvia which issued from the camp, filled the ears with their dismal howlings. From the deep blue sky,



there came no refreshing shower, but shrieks of hungry vultures, glancing down at the feast prepared for them, and screaming with impatience at the delay. The enemy himself had retreated to a distance, from fear of the contagion, and had ceased those hostilities which used momentarily to relieve the minds of the French from the contemplation of their situation. They were reduced to such a pitch of misery as to regret that no human foes disturbed the solitude where they were slowly perishing; and their eyes were fixed in unutterable woe on those broken pyramids, those mutilated columns, those remnants of former ages, of faded glories, on those eloquent ruins, which, long before the time when they sheltered Marius, spoke of nothing but past, present, and future miseries.

Such was the scene which awaited Louis on his death-bed. It was enough to strike despair into the boldest heart, but he stood it unmoved. A perpetual smile, such as grace only the lips of the blessed, enlivened his face; he looked round not only without dismay, but with an evangelical serenity of soul. He knew well that the apparent evils which he saw, were a mere passing trial, inflicted for the benefit of the sufferers, and for some goodly purpose; he knew that this transitory severity was the wise device of infinite and eternal benignity, and therefore, instead of repining, he thanked God for the chastisement which served only to hasten the coming reward. The vision of the Christian extends beyond the contracted sphere of the sufferings of humanity, and sees the crowning mercies that attend the disembodied spirits in a better world.

By the manner in which Louis died, this was strikingly illustrated. Calm and collected, after having distributed words of encouragement to all that could approach him, he summoned his son and successor to his



bedside, and laying his hands on his head to bless him, he bid him a short and an impressive farewell. "My son!" said he, "I die in peace with the world and with myself, warring only against the enemies of our holy faith. As a Christian, I have lived in the fear, and I depart in the hope of God. As a man, I have never wasted a thought on my own perishable body; and in obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I have always forgotten my own worldly interest to promote that of others. As a king, I have considered myself as my subjects' servant, and not my subjects as mine. If, as a Christian, as a man, and as a king, I have erred and sinned, it is unwillingly and in good faith, and therefore, I trust for mercy in my heavenly Father, and in the protection of the Holy Virgin. So I have lived—do thou likewise. Follow an example which secures to me such a sweet death amid such scenes of horror. Thou shalt find in my written will, such precepts as my experience and my affection for thee and for my subjects have devised for thy guidance and for their benefit. And now, my son, farewell! This life, as thou knowest, is a mere state of probation; hence, do not repine at our short separation. Blessed be thou here, and in heaven, where I hope to meet thee in everlasting bliss. So help me God! In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen!" Thus saying, he devoutly crossed himself, looked upward, and exclaimed: "Introibo in domum tuam, adorabo ad templum sanctum tuum." These were his last words. During his life, he was emphatically the Christian king: shortly after his death, he was canonized by the church, and became a saint.

In spite of these circumstances, which must have been hateful to Voltaire's turn of mind, the recollection of such exalted virtue extorted from that celebrated

writer a eulogy which is doubly flattering to the memory of him to whom the tribute is paid, if the source from which it came be considered. That arch scoffer, that systematic disbeliever in so much of what is held sacred by mankind, said of St. Louis, "That prince would have reformed Europe, if reformation had been possible at that time. He increased the power, prosperity, and civilization of France, and showed himself a type of human perfection. To the piety of an anchorite, he joined all the virtues of a king; and he practiced a wise system of economy, without ceasing to be liberal. Although a profound politician, he never deviated from what he thought strictly due to right and justice, and he is perhaps the sole sovereign to whom such commendation can be applied. Prudent and firm in the deliberations of the cabinet, distinguished for cool intrepidity in battle, as humane as if he had been familiar with nothing else but misery, he carried human virtue as far as it can be expected to extend."

Thus, it is seen that the Bay of St. Louis could not borrow a nobler name than that under which it is designated. The magnificent oaks which decorate its shore did perhaps remind Iberville of the oak of Vincennes, and to that circumstance may the bay be indebted for its appellation.

From the Bay of St. Louis, Iberville returned to his fleet, where, after consultation, he determined to make a settlement at the Bay of Biloxi. On the east side, at the mouth of the bay, as it were, there is a slight swelling of the shore, about four acres square, sloping gently to the woods in the background, and on the right and left of which, two deep ravines run into the bay. Thus, this position was fortified by nature, and the French skillfully availed themselves of these advantages. The weakest point, which was on the side

of the forest, they strengthened with more care than the rest, by connecting with a strong intrenchment the two ravines, which ran to the bay in a parallel line to each other. The fort was constructed with four bastions, and was armed with twelve pieces of artillery. When standing on one of the bastions which faced the bay, the spectator enjoyed a beautiful prospect. On the right, the bay could be seen running into the land for miles, and on the left stood Deer Island, concealing almost entirely the broad expanse of water which lay beyond. It was visible only at the two extreme points of the island, which both, at that distance, appeared to be within a close proximity of the main land. No better description can be given, than to say that the bay looked like a funnel, to which the island was the lid, not fitting closely, however, but leaving apertures for egress and ingress. The snugness of the locality had tempted the French, and had induced them to choose it as the most favorable spot, at the time, for colonization. Sauvolle, a brother of Iberville, was put in command of the fort, and Bienville, the youngest of the three brothers, was appointed his lieutenant.

A few huts having been erected round the fort, the settlers began to clear the land, in order to bring it into cultivation. Iberville, having furnished them with all the necessary provisions, utensils, and other supplies, prepared to sail for France. How deeply affecting must have been the parting scene! How many casualties might prevent those who remained in this unknown region from ever seeing again those who, through the perils of such a long voyage, had to return to their home! What crowding emotions must have filled up the breast of Sauvolle, Bienville, and their handful of companions, when they beheld the sails of Iberville's fleet fading in the distance, like transient clouds! Well

may it be supposed that it seemed to them as if their very souls had been carried away, and that they felt a momentary sinking of the heart, when they found themselves abandoned, and necessarily left to their own resources, scanty as they were, on a patch of land, between the ocean on one side, and on the other, a wilderness, which fancy peopled with every sort of terrors. The sense of their loneliness fell upon them like the gloom of night, darkening their hopes, and filling their hearts with dismal apprehensions.

But as the country had been ordered to be explored, Sauvolle availed himself of that circumstance to refresh the minds of his men by the excitement of an expedition into the interior of the continent. He therefore hastened to dispatch most of them with Bienville, who, with a chief of the Bayagoulas for his guide, went to visit the Colapissas. They inhabited the northern shore of Lake Pontchartrain, and their domains embraced the sites now occupied by Lewisburg, Mandeville, and Fontainebleau. That tribe numbered three hundred warriors, who, in their distant hunting excursions, had been engaged in frequent skirmishes with some of the British colonists in South Carolina. When the French landed, they were informed that, two days previous, the village of the Colapissas had been attacked by a party of two hundred Chickasaws, headed by two Englishmen. These were the first tidings which the French had of their old rivals, and which proved to be the harbinger of the incessant struggle which was to continue for more than a century between the two races, and to terminate by the permanent occupation of Louisiana by the Anglo-Saxon.

Bienville returned to the fort to convey this important information to Sauvolle. After having rested there for several days, he went to the Bay of Pasca-

goulas, and ascended the river which bears that name, and the banks of which were tenanted by a branch of the Biloxis, and by the Moelobites. Encouraged by the friendly reception which he met everywhere, he ventured farther, and paid a visit to the Mobilians, who entertained him with great hospitality. Bienville found them much reduced from what they had been, and listened with eagerness to the many tales of their former power, which had been rapidly declining since the crushing blow they had received from Soto.

When Iberville ascended the Mississippi the first time, he had remarked Bayou Plaquemines and Bayou Chetimachas. The one he called after the fruit of certain trees which appeared to have exclusive possession of its banks, and the other after the name of the Indians who dwelt in the vicinity. He had ordered them to be explored, and the indefatigable Bienville, on his return from Mobile, obeyed the instructions left to his brother, and made an accurate survey of these two Bayous. When he was coming down the river, at the distance of about eighteen miles below the site where New Orleans now stands, he met an English vessel of 16 guns, under the command of Captain Bar. The English captain informed the French that he was examining the banks of the river, with the intention of selecting a spot for the foundation of a colony. Bienville told him that Louisiana was a dependency of Canada; that the French had already made several establishments on the Mississippi; and he appealed, in confirmation of his assertions, to their own presence in the river, in such small boats, which evidently proved the existence of some settlement close at hand. The Englishman believed Bienville, and sailed back. Where this occurrence took place the river makes a considerable bend, and it was from the circumstance which I

have related that the spot received the appellation of the *English Turn*—a name which it has retained to the present day. It was not far from that place, the atmosphere of which appears to be fraught with some malignant spell hostile to the sons of Albion, that the English, who were outwitted by Bienville in 1699, met with a signal defeat in battle from the Americans in 1815. The diplomacy of Bienville and the military genius of Jackson proved to them equally fatal, when they aimed at the possession of Louisiana.

Since the exploring expedition of La Salle down the Mississippi, Canadian hunters, whose habits and intrepidity Fenimore Cooper has so graphically described in the character of Leather-Stocking, used to extend their roving excursions to the banks of that river; and those holy missionaries of the church, who, as the pioneers of religion, have filled the New World with their sufferings, and whose incredible deeds in the service of God afford so many materials for the most interesting of books, had come in advance of the pickaxe of the settler, and had domiciliated themselves among the tribes who lived near the waters of the Mississippi. One of them, Father Montigny, was residing with the Tensas, within the territory of the present parish of Tensas, in the State of Louisiana, and another, Father Davion, was the pastor of the Yazoo, in the present State of Mississippi.

Father Montigny was a descendant from Galon de Montigny, who had the honor of bearing the banner of France at the battle of Bouvines. It is well known that in 1214 a league of most of the European princes, the most powerful of whom were the King of England and the Emperor of Germany, was formed against Philip Augustus. The allied army, composed of one hundred thousand men, and the French army muster-

ing half that number, met at Bouvines, between Lille and Tournay. Before the battle, Philip reviewed his troops, and in their presence, removing his crown from his temples, said to the assembled host, "Peers, barons, knights, soldiers, and all ye that listen to me, if you know one more worthy of the crown of France than I am, you may award it to him." Shouts of enthusiasm declared that he was the worthiest. "Well, then," said he, "help me to keep it." The battle soon began, and raged for some time with alternate success for the belligerents. To the long gilded pole which supported the banner of France, and towered in proud majesty over the plain, the eyes of the French knights, scattered over the wide field of battle, were frequently turned with feverish anxiety. So long as it stood erect, and as firmly fixed in Montigny's iron grasp as if it had taken root in the soil, they knew that the king was safe, it being the duty of the bearer of that standard to keep close to the royal person, and never to lose sight of him. It was an arduous and a perilous duty, which devolved on none but one well tried among the bravest; and it was not long before Montigny had to plunge into the thickest of the fight, to retain his post near Philip Augustus, who felt on that trying occasion, when his crown was at stake, that the king was bound to prove himself the best knight of his army.

On a sudden, a cold chill ran through the boldest heart in the French ranks. The long stately pole which bore the royal banner was observed to wave distressfully, and to rock like the mast of a vessel tossed on a tempestuous sea. That fatal signal was well known—it meant that the king was in peril. Simultaneously, from every part of the field, every French knight, turning from the foe he had in front, dashed headlong away, and with resistless fury forced a pas-



sage to the spot where the fate of France was held in dubious suspense. One minute more of delay, and all would have been lost. The king had been unhorsed by the lance of a German knight, trampled under the feet of the chargers of the combatants, and had with difficulty been replaced on horseback. Those that came at last to the rescue, found him surrounded by the corpses of one hundred and twenty gentlemen of the best blood of France, who had died in his defence. His armor was shattered to pieces, his battle-axe, from the blows which it had given, was blunted into a mere club, and his arm, waxing faint, could hardly parry the blows which rained upon his head. Montigny stood alone by him, and was defending, with a valor worthy of the occasion, the flag and the king of France. That occasion, indeed, was one, if any, to nerve the arm of a man, and to madden such a one as Montigny into the execution of prodigies.

To be the royal standard-bearer, to fight side by side with his king, to have saved him perhaps from captivity or death; such were the proud destinies of the noble knight, Galon de Montigny. His descendant's lot in life was an humbler one in the estimation of the world, but perhaps a higher one in that of heaven. A hood, not a crested helmet, covered his head, and he was satisfied with being a soldier in the militia of Christ. But if, in the accomplishment of the duties of his holy faith, he courted dangers and even coveted tortures with heroic fortitude—if, in the cause of God, he used his spiritual weapons against vice, error and superstition, with as much zeal and bravery as others use carnal weapons in earthly causes—if, instead of a king's life, he saved thousands of souls from perdition—is he to be deemed recreant to his gentle blood, and is he not to be



esteemed as good a knight as his great ancestor of his torical renown?

Father Davion had resided for some time with the Tunicas, where he had made himself so popular, that, on the death of their chief, they had elected him to fill his place. The priest humbly declined the honor, giving for his reasons, that his new duties as their chief would be incompatible with those of his sacred ministry. Yet the Tunicas, who loved and venerated him as a man, were loth to abandon their old creed to adopt the Christian faith, and they turned a deaf ear to his admonitions. One day the missionary, incensed at their obstinate perseverance in idolatry, and wishing to demonstrate that their idols were too powerless to punish any offence aimed at them, burned their temple, and broke to pieces the rudely carved figures which were the objects of the peculiar adoration of that tribe. The Indians were so much attached to Father Davion, that they contented themselves with expelling him, and he retired on the territory of the Yazooos, who proved themselves readier proselytes, and became converts in a short time. This means that they adopted some of the outward signs of Christianity, without understanding or appreciating its dogmas.

Proud of his achievements, Father Davion had, with such aid as he could command, constructed and hung up a pulpit to the trunk of an immense oak, in the same manner that it is stuck to a pillar in the Catholic churches. Back of that tree, growing on the slight hill which commanded the river, he had raised a little Gothic chapel, the front part of which was divided by the robust trunk to which it was made to adhere, with two diminutive doors opening into the edifice, on either side of that vegetal tower. It was done in imitation of those stone towers, which stand like sentinels

wedged to the frontispiece of the temples of God, on the continent of Europe. In that chapel, Father Davion kept all the sacred vases, the holy water, and the sacerdotal habiliments. There he used to retire to spend hours in meditation and in prayer. In that tabernacle was a small portable altar, which, whenever he said mass for the natives, was transported outside, under the oak, where they often met to the number of three to four hundred. What a beautiful subject for painting! The majesty of the river—the glowing richness of the land in its virgin loveliness—the Gothic chapel—the pulpit which looked as if it had grown out of the holy oak—the hoary-headed priest, speaking with a sincerity of conviction, an impressiveness of manner and a radiancy of countenance worthy of an apostle—the motley crowd of the Indians, listening attentively, some with awe, others with meek submission, a few with a sneering incredulity, which, as the evangelical man went on, seemed gradually to vanish from their strongly marked features—in the background, a group of their juggling prophets, or conjurers, scowling with fierceness at the minister of truth, who was destroying their power;—would not all these elements, where the grandeur of the scenery would be combined with the acting of man and the development of his feelings, on an occasion of the most solemn nature, produce in the hands of a Salvator Rosa, or of a Poussin, the most striking effects?

Father Davion had acquired a perfect knowledge of the dialect of his neophytes, and spoke it with as much fluency as his own maternal tongue. He had both the physical and mental qualifications of an orator: he was tall and commanding in stature; his high receding forehead was well set off by his long, flowing, gray hairs, curling down to his shoulders; his face was “sicklied

over with the pale cast of thought ;” vigils and fasting had so emaciated his form that he seemed almost to be dissolved into spirituality. There was in his eyes a soft, blue, limpid transparency of look, which seemed to be a reflection from the celestial vault ; yet that eye, so calm, so benignant, could be lighted up with all the coruscations of pious wrath and indignation, when, in the pulpit, he vituperated his congregation for some act of cruelty or deceit, and threatened them with eternal punishment. First, he would remind them, with apostolic unction, with a voice as bland as the evening breeze, of the many benefits which the Great Spirit had showered upon them, and of the many more which he had in store for the red men, if they adhered strictly to his law. When he thus spoke, the sunshine of his serene, intellectual countenance would steal over his hearers, and their faces would express the wild delight which they felt. But, anon, when the holy father recollected the many and daily transgressions of his unruly children, a dark hue would, by degrees, creep over the radiancy of his face, as if a storm was gathering, and clouds after clouds were chasing each other over the mirror of his soul. Out of the inmost recesses of his heart, there arose a whirlwind which shook the holy man, in its struggle to rush out : then would flash the lightning of the eye ; then the voice, so soft, so insinuating, and even so caressing, would assume tones that sounded like repeated peals of thunder ; and a perfect tempest of eloquence would he pour forth upon his dismayed auditory, who crossed themselves, crouched to the earth and howled piteously, demanding pardon for their sins. Then, the ghostly orator, relenting at the sight of so much contrition, would descend like Moses from his Mount Sinai, laying aside the angry elements in which he had robed himself, as if he had come to

preside over the last judgment; and with the gentleness of a lamb, he would walk among his prostrate auditors, raising them from the ground, pressing them to his bosom, and comforting them with such sweet accents as a mother uses to lull her first-born to sleep. It was a spectacle touching in the extreme, and angelically pure!

Father Davion lived to a very old age, still commanding the awe and affection of his flock, by whom he was looked upon as a supernatural being. Had they not, they said, frequently seen him at night, with his dark, solemn gown, not walking, but gliding through the woods, like something spiritual? How could one, so weak in frame, and using so little food, stand so many fatigues? How was it, that whenever one of them fell sick, however distant it might be, Father Davion knew it instantly, and was sure to be there, before sought for? Who had given him the information? Who told him whenever they committed any secret sin? None; and yet, he knew it. Did any of his prophecies ever prove false? By what means did he arrive at so much knowledge about every thing? Did they not, one day, when he kneeled, as usual, in solitary prayer, under the holy oak, see from the respectful distance at which they stood, a ray of the sun piercing the thick foliage of the tree, cast its lambent flame around his temples, and wreath itself into a crown of glory, encircling his snow-white hair? What was it he was in the habit of muttering so long, when counting the beads of that mysterious chain that hung round his neck? Was he not then telling the Great Spirit every wrong they had done? So, they both loved and feared Father Davion. One day, they found him dead at the foot of the altar: he was leaning against it, with his head cast back, with his hands clasped, and still retain-

ing his kneeling position. There was an expression of rapture in his face, as if, to his sight, the gates of paradise had suddenly unfolded themselves to give him admittance: it was evident that his soul had exhaled into a prayer, the last on this earth, but terminating, no doubt, in a hymn of rejoicing above.

Long after Davion's death, mothers of the Yazoo tribe used to carry their children to the place where he loved to administer the sacrament of baptism. There, these simple creatures, with many ceremonies of a wild nature, partaking of their new Christian faith and of their old lingering Indian superstitions, invoked and called down the benedictions of Father Davion upon themselves and their families. For many years, that spot was designated under the name of *Davion's Bluff*. In recent times, Fort Adams was constructed where Davion's chapel formerly stood, and was the cause of the place being more currently known under a different appellation.

Such were the two visitors who, in 1699, appeared before Sauvolle, at the fort of Biloxi, to relieve the monotony of his cheerless existence, and to encourage him in his colonizing enterprise. Their visit, however, was not of long duration, and they soon returned to discharge the duties of their sacred mission.

Iberville had been gone for several months, and the year was drawing to a close without any tidings of him. A deeper gloom had settled over the little colony at Biloxi, when, on the 7th of December, some signal guns were heard at sea, and the grateful sound came booming over the waters, spreading joy in every breast. There was not one who was not almost oppressed with the intensity of his feelings. At last, friends were coming, bringing relief to the body and to the soul! Every colonist hastily abandoned his occupation of the

moment, and ran to the shore. The soldier himself, in the eagerness of expectation, left his post of duty, and rushed to the parapet which overlooked the bay. Presently, several vessels hove in sight, bearing the white flag of France, and, approaching as near as the shallowness of the beach permitted, folded their pinions, like water-fowls seeking repose on the crest of the billows.

It was Iberville, returning with the news that, on his representations, Sauvolle had been appointed by the king, Governor of Louisiana; Bienville Lieutenant-Governor, and Boisbriant commander of the fort at Biloxi, with the grade of Major. Iberville, having been informed by Bienville of the attempt of the English to make a settlement on the banks of the Mississippi, and of the manner in which it had been foiled, resolved to take precautionary measures against the repetition of any similar attempt. Without loss of time, he departed with Bienville, on the 17th of January, 1700, and running up the river, he constructed a small fort, on the first solid ground which he met, and which is said to have been at a distance of fifty-four miles from its mouth.

When so engaged, the two brothers one day saw a canoe rapidly sweeping down the river, and approaching the spot where they stood. It was occupied by eight men, six of whom were rowers, the seventh was the steersman, and the eighth, from his appearance, was evidently of a superior order to that of his companions, and the commander of the party. Well may it be imagined what greeting the stranger received, when, leaping on shore, he made himself known as the Chevalier de Tonti, who had again heard of the establishment of a colony in Louisiana, and who, for the second time, had come to see if there was any truth in the report. With what emotion did Iberville and Bienville fold in

their arms the faithful companion and friend of La Salle, of whom they had heard so many wonderful tales from the Indians, to whom he was so well known under the name of "Iron Hand!" With what admiration they looked at his person, and with what increasing interest they listened to his long recitals of what he had done and had seen on that broad continent, the threshold of which they had hardly passed!

After having rested three days at the fort, the indefatigable Tonti reascended the Mississippi, with Iberville and Bienville, and finally parted with them at Natchez. Iberville was so much pleased with that part of the bank of the river, where now exists the city of Natchez, that he marked it down as a most eligible spot for a town, of which he drew the plan, and which he called Rosalie, after the maiden name of the Countess Pontchartrain, the wife of the Chancellor. He then returned to the new fort he was erecting on the Mississippi, and Bienville went to explore the country of the Yatasses, of the Natchitoches, and of the Ouachitas. What romance can be more agreeable to the imagination than to accompany Iberville and Bienville in their wild explorations, and to compare the state of the country in their time with what it is in our days?

When the French were at Natchez, they were struck with horror at an occurrence, too clearly demonstrating the fierceness of disposition of that tribe, which was destined, in after years, to become so celebrated in the history of Louisiana. One of their temples having been set on fire by lightning, a hideous spectacle presented itself to the Europeans. The tumultuous rush of the Indians—the infernal howlings and lamentations of the men, women, and children—the unearthly vociferations of the priests, their fantastic dances and ceremonies around the burning edifice—the demoniac fury with



which mothers rushed to the fatal spot, and, with the piercing cries and gesticulations of maniacs, flung their new-born babes into the flames to pacify their irritated deity—the increasing anger of the heavens blackening with the impending storm, the lurid flashes of the lightnings, darting as it were in mutual enmity from the clashing clouds—the low, distant growling of the coming tempest—the long column of smoke and fire shooting upward from the funeral pyre, and looking like one of the gigantic torches of Pandemonium—the war of the elements combined with the worst effects of the frenzied superstition of man—the suddenness and strangeness of the awful scene—all these circumstances produced such an impression upon the French, as to deprive them, for the moment, of the powers of volition and action. Rooted to the ground, they stood aghast with astonishment and indignation at the appalling scene. Was it a dream?—a wild delirium of the mind? But no—the monstrous reality of the vision was but too apparent; and they threw themselves among the Indians, supplicating them to cease their horrible sacrifice to their gods, and joining threats to their supplications. Owing to this intervention, and perhaps because a sufficient number of victims had been offered, the priests gave the signal of retreat, and the Indians slowly withdrew from the accursed spot. Such was the aspect under which the Natchez showed themselves, for the first time, to their visitors: it was an ominous presage for the future.

After these explorations, Iberville departed again for France, to solicit additional assistance from the government, and left Bienville in command of the new fort on the Mississippi. It was very hard for the two brothers, Sauvolle and Bienville, to be thus separated, when they stood so much in need of each other's countenance, to



breast the difficulties that sprung up around them with a luxuriance which they seemed to borrow from the vegetation of the country. The distance between the Mississippi and Biloxi was not so easily overcome in those days as in ours, and the means which the two brothers had of communing together were very scanty and uncertain. Sauvolle and his companions had suffered much from the severity of the winter, which had been so great that in one of his dispatches he informed his government that "*water, when poured into tumblers to rinse them, froze instantaneously, and before it could be used.*"

At last, the spring made its appearance, or rather the season which bears that denomination, but which did not introduce itself with the genial and mild atmosphere that is its characteristic in other climes. The month of April was so hot that the colonists could work only two hours in the morning and two in the evening. When there was no breeze, the reflection of the sun from the sea and from the sandy beach was intolerable; and if they sought relief under the pine trees of the forest, instead of meeting cool shades, it seemed to them that there came from the very lungs of the trees a hot breath, which sent them back hastily to the burning shore, in quest of air. Many of the colonists, accustomed to the climate of Canada and France, languished, pined, fell sick, and died. Some, as they lay panting under the few oaks that grew near the fort, dreamed of the verdant valleys, the refreshing streams, the picturesque hills, and the snow-capped mountains of their native land. The fond scenes upon which their imagination dwelt with rapture, would occasionally assume, to their enfeebled vision, the distinctness of real existence, and feverish recollection would produce on the horizon of the mind, such an apparition as tantalizes

the dying traveler in the parched deserts of Arabia. When despair had paved the way, it was easy for disease to follow, and to crush those that were already prostrate in mind and in body. To increase the misery of these poor wretches, famine herself raised her spectral form among them, and grasped pestilence by the hand to assist her in the work of desolation. Thus, that fiendish sisterhood reigned supreme, where, in our days, health, abundance, and wealth, secured by the improvements of civilization, bless the land with perpetual smiles.

Sauvolle, from the feebleness of his constitution, was more exposed than any of his companions to be affected by the perils of the situation; and yet it was he upon whom devolved the duty of watching over the safety of others. But he was sadly incapacitated for the discharge of that duty by physical and moral causes. When an infant, he had inherited a large fortune from an aunt, whose godson he was. With such means at his future command, the boy, who gave early evidence of a superior intellect, became the darling hope of his family, and was sent to France to be qualified for the splendid career which parental fondness anticipated for him. The seeds of education were not, in that instance, thrown on a rebellious soil; and when Sauvolle left the seat of learning where he had been trained, he carried away with him the admiration of his professors and of his schoolmates. In the high circles of society where his birth and fortune entitled him to appear, he produced no less sensation; and well he might, for he appeared, to an eminent degree, capable of adorning any station which he might wish to occupy. Nature had been pleased to produce another Crichton, and Sauvolle soon became known as the *American prodigy*. Racine called him a poet; Bossuet had declared that there

were in him all the materials of a great orator; and the haughty Villars, after a conversation of several hours with him, was heard to say, "Here is a Marshal of France in embryo."

The frivolous admired his wonderful expertness in fencing, in horsemanship, and his other acquirements of a similar nature; artists might have been proud of his talent for painting and for music; and those friends that were admitted into his intimacy were struck with his modesty and with the high-toned morality which pervaded the life of one so young. The softer sex, yielding to the fascination of his manly graces, was held captive by them, and hailed his first steps on the world's stage with all the passionate enthusiasm of the female heart. But he loved and was loved by the fairest daughter of one of the noblest houses of France, and his nuptials were soon to be celebrated with fitting pomp. Was not this the acme of human felicity? If so, whence that paleness which sat on his brow, and spoke of inward pain, moral or physical? Whence those sudden starts? Why was he observed occasionally to grasp his heart with a convulsive hand? What appalling disclosure could make him desert her to whom his faith was plighted, and could so abruptly hurry him away from France and from that seat where so much happiness was treasured up for him? That it was no voluntary act on his part, and that he was merely complying with the stern decree of fate, could be plainly inferred from that look of despair which, from the ship that bore him away, he cast at the shores of France when receding from his sight. So must Adam have looked, when he saw the flaming sword of the angel of punishment interposed between him and Paradise.

Sauvolle arrived in Canada at the very moment when Iberville and Bienville were preparing their ex-

pedition to Louisiana; and he eagerly begged to join them, saying that he knew his days were numbered, that he had come back to die in America, and that since his higher aspirations were all blasted, he could yet find some sort of melancholy pleasure in closing his career in that new colony, of which his brothers were to be the founders, and to which they were to attach their names forever.

Poor Sauvolle! the star of his destiny which rose up at the court of Louis the XIVth with such gorgeousness, was now setting in gloom and desolation on the bleak shore of Biloxi. How acute must his mental agony have been, when, by day and by night, the comparison of what he might have been with what he was must have incessantly forced itself upon his mind: Why had Nature qualified him to be the best of husbands and fathers, when forbidding him, at the same time, to assume the sacred character which he coveted, and to form those ties, without which, existence could only be a curse to one so exquisitely framed to nourish the choicest affections of our race? Why give him all the elements of greatness, and preclude their development? Why inspire him with the consciousness of worth, and deny him time and life for its manifestation? Why had such a mind and such a soul been lodged in a defective body, soon to be dissolved? Why a blade of such workmanship in such an unworthy scabbard? Why create a being with feelings as intense as ever animated one of his species, merely to bruise them in the bud? Why shower upon him gifts of such value, when they were to be instantly resumed? Why light up the luminary which was to be extinguished before its rays could be diffused? Was it not a solemn mockery? What object could it answer, except to inflict extreme misery? Surely, it could only be a concep-

tion or device of the arch-enemy of mankind! But how could he be allowed thus to trifle with God's creatures? Were they his puppets and playthings? or, was it one of God's inscrutable designs? Was it an enigma only to be solved hereafter?—These reflections may be supposed to have passed through Sauvolle's mind, as he, with folded arms, one day, stood on the parapet of the fort at Biloxi, looking sorrowfully at the scene of desolation around him, at his diseased and famished companions. Overwhelmed with grief, he withdrew his gaze from the harrowing sight, heaved a deep sigh and uplifted his eyes toward heaven, with a look which plainly asked, if his placid resignation and acquiescent fortitude had not entitled him at last to repose. That look of anguish was answered: a slight convulsion flitted over his face, his hand grasped the left side of his breast, his body tottered, and Sauvolle was dead before he reached the ground.

Such was the fate of the first governor of Louisiana. A hard fate indeed is that of defective organization! An anticipated damnation it is, for the unbeliever, when spiritual perfection is palsied and rendered inert by being clogged with physical imperfection, or wedded to diseased matter! When genius was flashing in the head, when the spirit of God lived in the soul, why did creation defeat its own apparent purposes, in this case, by planting in the heart the seeds of aneurism? It is a question which staggers philosophy, confounds human reason, and is solved only by the revelations of Christianity.

What a pity that Sauvolle had not the faith of a Davion, or of a St. Louis, whose deaths I have recorded in the preceding pages! He would have known that the heavier the cross we bear with Christian resignation in this world, the greater the reward is in the

better one which awaits us : and that our trials in this, our initiatory state of terrestrial existence, are merely intended by the infinite goodness of the Creator, as golden opportunities for us to show our fidelity, and to deserve a higher or lesser degree of happiness, when we shall enter into the celestial kingdom of spiritual and eternal life, secured to us at the price of *sufferings* alone : and what sufferings ! Those of the Godhead himself ! He would not then have repined at pursuing the thorny path, trod before, for his sake, by the divine Victim, and with Job he would have said : “ Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge ? Therefore have I uttered that I understood not ; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord ! ”

I lately stood where the first establishment of the French was made, and I saw no vestiges of their passage, save in the middle of the space formerly occupied by the fort, where I discovered a laying of bricks on a level with the ground, and covering the common area of a tomb. Is it the repository of Sauvolle's remains ? I had with me no pickaxe to solve the question, and indeed it was more agreeable to the mood in which I was then, to indulge in speculations, than to ascertain the truth. Since the fort had been abandoned, it was evident that there never had been any attempt to turn the ground to some useful purpose, although, being cleared of trees, it must have been more eligible for a settlement than the adjoining ground which remained covered with wood. Yet, on the right and left, beyond the two ravines already mentioned, habitations are to be seen ; but a sort of traditionary awe seems to have repelled intrusion from the spot marked by such melancholy recollections. On the right, as you approach

the place, a beautiful villa, occupied by an Anglo American family, is replete with all the comforts and resources of modern civilization ; while on the left, there may be seen a rude hut, where still reside descendants from the first settlers, living in primitive ignorance and irreclaimable poverty, which lose, however, their offensive features, by being mixed up with so much of patriarchal virtues, of pristine innocence, and of arcadian felicity. These two families, separated only by the site of the old fort, but between whose social position, there existed such an immense distance, struck me as being fit representatives of the past and of the present. One was the type of the French colony, and the other, the emblem of its modern transformation.

I gazed with indescribable feelings on the spot where Sauvolle and his companions had suffered so much. Humble and abandoned as it is, it was clothed in my eye with a sacred character, when I remembered that it was the cradle of so many sovereign states, which are but *disjecta membra* of the old colony of Louisiana. What a contrast between the French colony of 1700, and its imperial substitute of 1848 ! Is there in the mythological records of antiquity, or in the fairy tales of the Arabian Nights, any thing that will not sink into insignificance, when compared with the romance of such a history ?

## THIRD LECTURE.

**SITUATION OF THE COLONY FROM 1701 TO 1712—THE PETTICOAT INSURRECTION—  
HISTORY AND DEATH OF IBERVILLE—BIENVILLE, THE SECOND GOVERNOR OF  
LOUISIANA—HISTORY OF ANTHONY CROZAT, THE GREAT MERCHANT—CONCESSION OF  
LOUISIANA TO HIM.**

SAUVOLLE had died on the 22d of July, 1701, and Louisiana had remained under the sole charge of Bienville, who, though very young, was fully equal to meet that emergency, by the maturity of his mind and by his other qualifications. He had hardly consigned his brother to the tomb, when Iberville returned with two ships of the line and a brig laden with troops and provisions. The first object that greeted his sight, on his landing, was Bienville, whose person was in deep mourning, and whose face wore such an expression as plainly told that a blow, fatal to both, had been struck in the absence of the head of the family. In their mute embraces, the two brothers felt that they understood each other better than if their grief had vented itself in words, and Iberville's first impulse was to seek Sauvolle's tomb. There he knelt for hours, bathed in tears, and absorbed in fervent prayer for him whom he was to see no more in the garb of mortality. This recent blow reminded him of a father's death, whom he had seen carried off, bleeding, from the battle-field; and then his four brothers, who had met the same stern and honorable fate, rose to his sight with their ghastly wounds; and he bethought himself of the sweet and melancholy face of his mother, who had sunk gradually



into the grave, drooping like a gentle flower under the rough visitations of the wind of adversity. On these heavy recollections of the past, his heart swelled with tears, and he implored heaven to spare his devoted family, or, if any one of its members was again destined to an early death, to take *him*, Iberville, as a free offering, in preference to the objects of his love. But there are men, upon whom grief operates as fire upon steel: it purifies the metal, and gives more elasticity to its spring; it works upon the soul with that same mysterious process by which nature transforms the dark carbuncle into the shining diamond. These men know how to turn from the desolation of their heart, and survey the world with a clearer, serener eye, to choose the sphere where they can best accomplish their mission on this earth—that mission—the fulfilment of duties whence good is to result to mankind, or to their country. One of these highly gifted beings Iberville was, and he soon withdrew his attention from the grave, to give it entirely to the consolidation of the great national enterprise he had undertaken—the establishment of a colony in Louisiana.

According to Iberville's orders, and in conformity with the king's instructions, Bienville left Boisbriant, his cousin, with twenty men, at the old fort of Biloxi, and transported the principal seat of the colony to the western side of the river Mobile, not far from the spot where now stands the city of Mobile. Near the mouth of that river, there is an island, which the French had called Massacre Island, from the great quantity of human bones which they found bleaching on its shores. It was evident that *there* some awful tragedy had been acted; but tradition, when interrogated, laid *her choppy finger upon her skinny lips*, and answered not. This uncertainty, giving a free scope to the imagination,

shrouded the place with a higher degree of horror, and with a deeper hue of fantastical gloom. It looked like the favorite ball-room of the witches of hell. The wind sighed so mournfully through the shriveled up pines, whose vampire heads seemed incessantly to bow to some invisible and grisly visitors: the footsteps of the stranger emitted such an awful and supernatural sound, when trampling on the skulls which strewn his path, that it was impossible for the coldest imagination not to labor under some crude and ill-defined apprehensions. Verily, the weird sisters could not have chosen a fitter abode. Nevertheless, the French, supported by their mercurial temperament, were not deterred from forming an establishment on that sepulchral island, which, they thought, afforded some facilities for their transatlantic communications. They changed its name, however, and called it Dauphine Island. As, to many, this name may be without signification, it may not be improper to state, that the wife of the eldest born of the King of France, and consequently, of the presumptive heir to the crown, was, at that time, called the Dauphine, and her husband the Dauphin. This was in compliment to the province of Dauphiné, which was annexed to the kingdom of France, on the abdication of a Count of Dauphiné, who ceded that principality to the French monarch in 1349. Hence the origin of the appellation given to the island. It was a high-sounding and courtly name for such a bleak repository of the dead!

Iberville did not tarry long in Louisiana. His home was the broad ocean, where he had been nursed, as it were; and he might have exclaimed with truth, in the words of Byron:—

— “I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy  
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
F

Borne, like bubbles, onward : from a boy  
I wantoned with thy breakers—they to me  
Were a delight ; and if the freshening sea  
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,  
For I was as it were a child of thee,  
And trusted to thy billows far and near,  
And laid my hand upon thy mane."

But, before his departure, he gave some wholesome advice to his government:—"It is necessary," said he, in one of his dispatches, "to send here honest tillers of the earth, and not rogues and paupers, who come to Louisiana solely with the intention of making a fortune, by all sorts of means, in order to speed back to Europe. Such men can not be elements of prosperity to a colony." He left those, of whom he was the chief protector, abundantly supplied with every thing, and seeing that their affectionate hearts were troubled with manifold misgivings as to their fate, which appeared to them to be closely linked with his own, he promised soon to return, and to bring additional strength to what he justly looked upon as his creation. But it had been decreéd otherwise.

In 1703, war had broken out between Great Britain, France and Spain ; and Iberville, a distinguished officer of the French navy, was engaged in expeditions that kept him away from the colony. It did not cease, however, to occupy his thoughts, and had become clothed, in his eye, with a sort of family interest. Louisiana was thus left, for some time, to her scanty resources ; but, weak as she was, she gave early proofs of that generous spirit which has ever since animated her ; and, on the towns of Pensacola and San Augustine, then in possession of the Spaniards, being threatened with an invasion by the English of South Carolina, she sent to her neighbors what help she could, in men, ammunition,

and supplies of all sorts. It was the more meritorious, as it was the obolus of the poor!

The year 1703 slowly rolled by, and gave way to 1704. Still, nothing was heard from the parent country. There seemed to be an impassable barrier between the old and the new continent. The milk which flowed from the motherly breast of France could no longer reach the parched lips of her new-born infant; and famine began to pinch the colonists, who scattered themselves all along the coast, to live by fishing. They were reduced to the veriest extremity of misery, and despair had settled in every bosom, in spite of the encouragements of Bienville, who displayed the most manly fortitude amid all the trials to which he was subjected, when suddenly a vessel made its appearance. The colonists rushed to the shore with wild anxiety, but their exultation was greatly diminished when, on the nearer approach of the moving speck, they recognized the Spanish, instead of the French flag. It was relief, however, coming to them, and proffered by a friendly hand. It was a return made by the governor of Pensacola, for the kindness he had experienced the year previous. Thus, the debt of gratitude was paid: it was a practical lesson. Where the seeds of charity are cast, *there* springs the harvest in time of need.

Good things, like evils, do not come single, and this succor was but the herald of another one, still more effectual, in the shape of a ship from France. Iberville had not been able to redeem his pledge to the poor colonists, but he had sent his brother Chateaugué in his place, at the imminent risk of being captured by the English, who occupied, at that time, most of the avenues of the Gulf of Mexico. *He* was not the man to spare either himself, or his family, in cases of emergency, and his heroic soul was inured to such sacrifices. Grate-

ful the colonists were for this act of devotedness, and they resumed the occupation of those tenements which they had abandoned in search of food. The aspect of things was suddenly changed ; abundance and hope reappeared in the land, whose population was increased by the arrival of seventeen persons, who came, under the guidance of Chateaugué, with the intention of making a permanent settlement, and who, in evidence of their determination, had provided themselves with all the implements of husbandry. We, who daily see hundreds flocking to our shores, and who look at the occurrence with as much unconcern as at the passing cloud, can hardly conceive the excitement produced by the arrival of these seventeen emigrants among men who, for nearly two years, had been cut off from communication with the rest of the civilized world. A denizen of the moon, dropping on this planet, would not be stared at and interrogated with more eager curiosity.

This excitement had hardly subsided, when it was revived by the appearance of another ship, and it became intense, when the inhabitants saw a procession of twenty females, with veiled faces, proceeding arm in arm, and two by two, to the house of the governor, who received them in state, and provided them with suitable lodgings. What did it mean ? Innumerable were the gossipings of the day, and part of the coming night itself was spent in endless commentaries and conjectures. But the next morning, which was Sunday, the mystery was cleared by the officiating priest reading from the pulpit, after mass, and for the general information, the following communication from the minister to Bienville : " His majesty sends twenty girls to be married to the Canadians and to the other inhabitants of Mobile, in order to consolidate the colony. All these

girls are industrious, and have received a pious and virtuous education. Beneficial results to the colony are expected from their teaching their useful attainments to the Indian females. In order that none should be sent except those of known virtue and of unspotted reputation, his majesty did intrust the bishop of Quebec with the mission of taking these girls from such establishments, as, from their very nature and character, would put them at once above all suspicions of corruption. You will take care to settle them in life as well as may be in your power, and to marry them to such men as are capable of providing them with a commodious home."

This was a very considerate recommendation, and very kind it was, indeed, from the great Louis the XIVth, one of the proudest monarchs that ever lived, to descend from his Olympian seat of majesty, to the level of such details, and to such minute instructions for ministering to the personal comforts of his remote Louisianian subjects. Many were the gibes and high was the glee on that occasion; pointed were the jokes aimed at young Bienville, on his being thus transformed into a matrimonial agent and pater familiæ. The intentions of the king, however, were faithfully executed, and more than one rough but honest Canadian boatman of the St. Lawrence and of the Mississippi, closed his adventurous and erratic career, and became a domestic and useful member of that little commonwealth, under the watchful influence of the dark-eyed maid of the Loire or of the Seine. Infinite are the chords of the lyre which delights the romantic muse; and these incidents, small and humble as they are, appear to me to be imbued with an indescribable charm, which appeals to her imagination.

Iberville had gone back to France since 1701, and

the year 1705 had now begun its onward course, without his having returned to the colony, according to his promise, so that the inhabitants had become impatient of further delay. They were in that state of suspense, when a ship of the line, commanded by Ducoudray, arrived soon after the opening of the year, but still to disappoint the anxious expectations of the colonists. No Iberville had come: yet there was some consolation in the relief which was sent—goods, provisions, ammunition; flesh-pots of France, rivaling, to a certainty, those of Egypt; sparkling wines to cheer the cup; twenty-three girls to gladden the heart; five priests to minister to the wants of the soul and to bless holy alliances; two sisters of charity to attend on the sick and preside over the hospital of the colony, and seventy-five soldiers for protection against the inroads of the Indians. This was something to be thankful for, and to occupy the minds of the colonists for a length of time. But life is chequered with many a hue, and the antagonistical agents of good and evil closely tread, in alternate succession, on the heels of each other. Thus, the short-lived rejoicings of the colonists soon gave way to grief and lamentations. A hungry epidemic did not disdain to prey upon the population, small as it was, and thirty-five persons became its victims. Thirty-five! This number was enormous in those days, and the epidemic of 1705 became as celebrated in the medical annals of the country, as will be the late one of 1847.

The history of Louisiana, in her early days, presents a Shaksperian mixture of the terrible and of the ludicrous. What can be more harrowing than the massacre of the French settlement on the Wabash in 1705; and in 1706, what more comical than the threatened insurrection of the French girls, who had come to set-



tle in the country, under allurements which proved deceptive, and who were particularly indignant at being fed on corn? This fact is mentioned in these terms in one of Bienville's dispatches: "The males in the colony begin, through habit, to be reconciled to corn, as an article of nourishment; but the females, who are mostly Parisians, have for this kind of food a dogged aversion, which has not yet been subdued. Hence, they inveigh bitterly against his grace, the Bishop of Quebec, who, they say, has enticed them away from home, under the pretext of sending them to enjoy the milk and honey of the land of promise." Enraged at having thus been deceived, they swore that they would force their way out of the colony, on the first opportunity. This was called the *petticoat insurrection*.

There were, at that particular time, three important personages, who were the hinges upon which every thing turned in the commonwealth of Louisiana. These magnates were, Bienville, the governor, who wielded the sword, and who was the great executive mover of all; La Salle, the intendant commissary of the crown, who had the command of the purse, and who therefore might be called the controlling power; and the Curate de la Vente, who was not satisfied with mere spiritual influence. Unfortunately, in this Liliputian administration, the powers of the state and church were sadly at variance, in imitation of their betters in larger communities. The commissary, La Salle, in a letter of the 7th of December, 1706, accused Iberville, Bienville, and Chateaugué, the three brothers, of being guilty of *every sort of malfeasances and dilapidations*." "They are rogues," said he, "who pilfer away his Majesty's goods and effects." The Curate de la Vente, whose pretensions to temporal power Bienville had checked, backed La Salle, and undertook to discredit the gov-



ernor's authority with the colonists, by boasting of his having sufficient influence at court to cause him to be soon dismissed from office.

On Bienville's side stood, of course, Chateaugué, his brother, and Major Boisbriant, his cousin. But Chateaugué was a new man (*novus homo*) in the colony, and consequently had, as yet, acquired very little weight. Boisbriant, although a zealous friend, had found means to increase the governor's vexations, by falling deeply in love. He had been smitten, perhaps, for the want of something better, with the charms of a lady, to whose charge had been committed the twenty girls selected by the Bishop of Quebec, and who had been appointed, as a sort of lay abbess, to superintend their conduct on the way and in Louisiana, until they got provided with those suitable monitors who are called husbands. That lady had reciprocated the affections of Boisbriant, and so far, the course of love ran smooth. But, as usual, it was doomed to meet with one of those obstacles which have given rise to so many beautiful literary compositions. Bienville stoutly objected to the match, as being an unfit one for his relation and subordinate, and peremptorily refused his approbation. Well may the indignation of the lady be conceived! Boisbriant seems to have meekly submitted to the superior wisdom of his chief, but she, scorning such forbearance, addressed herself to the minister, and complained, in no measured terms, of what she called an act of oppression. After having painted her case with as strong colors as she could, she very naturally concluded her observations with this sweeping declaration concerning Bienville: "It is therefore evident that he has not the necessary qualifications to be governor of this colony." Such is the logic of

Love, and although it may provoke a smile, thereby hangs a tale not destitute of romance.

These intestine dissensions were not the only difficulties that Bienville had to cope with. The very existence of the colony was daily threatened by the Indians; a furious war, in which the French were frequently implicated, raged between the Chickasaws and the Choctaws; and the smaller nations, principally the Alibamons, that prowled about the settlements of the colonists, committed numerous thefts and murders. It seemed that all the elements of disorder were at work to destroy the social organization which civilization had begun, and that the wild chaos of barbarian sway claimed his own again. Uneasy lay the head of Bienville in his midnight sleep, for fearfully alive was he to the responsibility which rested on his shoulders. In that disturbed state of his mind, with what anxiety did he not interrogate the horizon, and strain to peep into the vacancy of space, in the fond hope that some signs of his brother's return would greet his eyes! But, alas! the year 1707 had run one half of its career, and yet Iberville came not. To what remote parts of heaven had the eagle flown, not to hear and not to mind the shrieks of the inmates of his royal nest? Not oblivious the eagle had been, but engaged in carrying Jove's thunderbolts, he had steadily pursued the accomplishment of his task.

Dropping the metaphorical style, it will be sufficient to state, that during the five years he had been absent from Louisiana, Iberville had been, with his usual success, nobly occupied in supporting the honor of his country's flag, and in increasing the reputation which he had already gained, as one of the brightest gems of the French navy. If the duration of a man's existence is to be measured by the merit of his deeds, then Iber-

ville had lived long, before reaching the meridian of life, and he was old in fame, if not in years, when he undertook to establish a colony in Louisiana. From his early youth, all his days had been well spent, because dedicated to some useful or generous purpose. The soft down of adolescence had hardly shaded his face, when he had become the idol of his countrymen. The foaming brine of the ocean, the dashing waters of the rivers, the hills and valleys of his native country and of the neighboring British possessions, had witnessed his numerous exploits. Such were the confidence and love with which he had inspired the Canadians and Acadians for his person, by the irresistible seduction of his manners, by the nobleness of his deportment, by the dauntless energy of his soul, and by the many qualifications of his head and heart, that they would, said Father Charlevoix, have followed him to the confines of the universe. It would be too long to recite his wonderful achievements, and the injuries which he inflicted upon the fleets of England, particularly in the Bay of Hudson, either by open force, or by stealth and surprise. When vessels were icebound, they were more than once stormed by Iberville and his intrepid associates. Two of his brothers, Ste. Hélène and Méricourt, both destined to an early death, used to be his willing companions in these adventurous expeditions. At other times, when the war of the elements seemed to preclude any other contest, Iberville, in a light buoyant craft, which sported merrily on the angry waves, would scour far and wide the Bay of Hudson, and the adjacent sea, to prey upon the commerce of the great rival of France, and many were the prizes which he brought into port. These were the sports of his youth.

The exploits of Iberville on land and at sea acquired

for him a sort of amphibious celebrity. Among other doings of great daring, may be mentioned the taking of Corlar, near Orange, in the province of New York. In November, 1694, he also took, in the Bay of Hudson, the fort of Port Nelson, defended by forty-two pieces of artillery, and he gave it the name of Fort Bourbon. In 1696 he added to his other conquests, the Fort of Pemkuit in Acadia. When Chubb, the English commander, was summoned to surrender, he returned this proud answer: "If the sea were white with French sails, and the land dark with Indians, I would not give up the fort, unless when reduced to the very last extremities." In spite of this vaunt, he was soon obliged to capitulate. The same year, Iberville possessed himself of the Fort of St. John, in Newfoundland, and in a short time forced the rest of that province to yield to his arms. The French, however, did not retain it long. But his having revived La Salle's project of establishing a colony in Louisiana, constitutes, on account of the magnitude of its results, his best claim to the notice of posterity. We have seen how he executed that important undertaking.

After a long absence from that province, the colonization of which was his favorite achievement, he was now preparing to return to its shores, and arrived at San Domingo, having under his command a considerable fleet, with which he meditated to attack Charleston in South Carolina; from whence he cherished the hope of sailing for Louisiana, with all the pomp, pride, and circumstance of glorious victory. He had stopped at San Domingo, because he had been authorized to reinforce himself with a thousand men, whom he was to take out of the garrison of that island. The ships had been revictualed, the troops were embarked, and Iberville was ready to put to sea, when a great feast

was tendered to him and to his officers, by the friends from whom he was soon to part. Loud the sound of revelry was still heard in hall and bower, when Iberville, whose thoughts dwelt on the responsibilities of the expedition which had been intrusted to his care, withdrew from the assembly, where he had been the observed of all, leaving and even encouraging his subordinates to enjoy the rest of that fairy night, which he knew was soon to be succeeded for them by the perils and hardships of war. He was approaching that part of the shore where his boat lay, waiting to carry him to his ship, when, as he trod along, in musing loneliness, his attention was attracted by the beauties of the tropical sky, which gleamed over his head. From that spangled canopy, so lovely that it seemed worthy of Eden, there appeared to descend an ambrosial atmosphere, which glided through the inmost recesses of the body, gladdening the whole frame with voluptuous sensations. Iberville's pace slackened as he admired, and at last he stopped, rooted to the ground, as it were by a sort of magnetic influence, exercised upon him by the fascinations of the scene. Folding his arms, and wrapt up in ecstasy, he gazed long and steadily at the stars which studded the celestial vault.

O stars! who has not experienced your mystical and mysterious power! Who has ever gazed at you, without feeling undefinable sensations, something of awe, and a vague consciousness that ye are connected with the fate of mortals! Ye silent orbs, that move with noiseless splendor through the infiniteness of space, how is it that your voice is so distinctly heard in the soul of man, if his essence and yours were not bound together by some electric link, as are all things, no doubt, in the universe? How the eyes grow dim with rapturous tears, and the head dizzy with wild fancies, when holding communion

with you, on the midnight watch ! Ye stars, that, scattered over the broad expanse of heaven, look to me as if ye were grains of golden dust, which God shook off his feet, as he walked in his might, on the days of creation, I love and worship you ! When there were none in the world to sympathize with an aching heart, with a heart that would have disdained, in its lonely pride, to show its pangs to mortal eyes, how often have I felt relief in your presence from the bitter recollection of past woes, and consolation under the infliction of present sufferings ! How often have I drawn from you such inspirations as prepared me to meet, with fitting fortitude, harsher trials still to come ! How often have I gazed upon you, until, flying upon the wings of imagination, I soared among your bright host, and spiritualized myself away, far away, from the miseries of my contemptible existence ! Howsoever that ephemeral worm, cynical man, may sneer, he is no idle dreamer, the lover of you, the star-gazer. The broad sheet of heaven to which ye are affixed, like letters of fire, is a book prepared by God for the learned and the ignorant, where man can read lessons to guide him through the active duties and the struggles of this life, and to conduct him safely to the portals of the eternal one which awaits mortality !

Thus, perhaps, Iberville felt, as he was spying the face of heaven. But death was around him—it was in the very air which he breathed. The soft balmy breeze in which he luxuriated, was impregnated with an insidious poison, fatal to those not born in tropical climates. The pestilence so well known under the name of yellow fever was sweeping over the land. Giving no warning of its presence, it was among yonder revelers whom Iberville had just left, and whose music and mundane mirth still reached his ears. Morning came,

and Iberville fell ill, and on the third day was gathered to his forefathers' bosom. Thus died this truly great and good man, in compliment to whose memory the name of Iberville was given to one of our most important parishes.

Ill was the wind that carried to Louisiana the melancholy information of Iberville's death. It blasted the hearts of the poor colonists, and destroyed the hope they had of being speedily relieved. Their situation had become truly deplorable: their numbers were rapidly diminishing: and the Indians were daily becoming more hostile, and more bold in their demands for goods and merchandise, as a tribute which they exacted for not breaking out into actual warfare. Bienville convened the chiefs of the Chickasaws and of the Choctaws, in order to conciliate them by some trifling presents of which he could yet dispose, and to gain time by some fair promises as to what he would do for them under more favorable circumstances. With a view of making an imposing show, Bienville collected all the colonists that were within reach: but notwithstanding that display, a question, propounded by one of the Indian chiefs, gave him a humiliating proof of the slight estimation in which the savages held the French nation. Much to his annoyance, he was asked if that part of his people which remained at home was as numerous as that which had come to settle in Louisiana. Bienville, who spoke their language perfectly well, attempted, by words and comparisons suited to their understanding, to impart to them a correct notion of the extent of the population of France. But the Indians looked incredulous, and one of them even said to Bienville, "If your countrymen are, as you affirm, as thick on their native soil as the leaves of our forests, how is it that they do not send more of their warriors here, to avenge the death of



such of them as have fallen by our hands? Not to do so, when having the power, would argue them to be of a very base spirit. And how is it that most of the tall and powerful men that came with you, being dead, are replaced only by boys, or cripples, or women, that do you no credit? Surely the French would not so behave, if they could do otherwise, and my white brother tells a story that disparages his own tribe."

Thus Bienville found himself in a very critical situation. He was conscious that his power was despised by the Indians, who knew that he had only forty-five soldiers at his disposal, and he felt that the red men could easily rise upon him and crush the colony at one blow. He was aware that they were restrained from doing the deed by their cupidity only, bridled as they were by their expectation of the arrival of some ship with merchandise, which, they knew from experience, would soon have to come to their huts to purchase peace, and in exchange for furs. Bienville felt so weak, so much at the mercy of the surrounding nations, and entertained such an apprehension of some treacherous and sudden attack on their part, that he thought it prudent to concentrate his forces, and to abandon the fort where he kept a small garrison on the Mississippi.

On the other hand, the death of Iberville had encouraged the hostility of Bienville's enemies. They knew that he was no longer supported by the powerful influence of his brother at court, and they renewed their attacks with a better hope of success. The commissary La Salle pushed on his intrigues with more activity, and reduced them to a sort of systematic warfare. He divided the colony into those that were against and those that were for Bienville. All such persons as supported the governor's administration were branded as felons: and those that pursued another course, who-



ever they might be, were angels of purity. At that time, there was in the colony a physician, sent thither and salaried by the government, who was called the king's physician. His name was Barrot: from the circumstance of his being the only member of his profession in the country, and from the nature of his duties, he was in a position to exercise a good deal of influence. La Salle attempted to win him over to his side, and having failed in his efforts, he immediately wrote to the minister, "that Barrot, although he had the honor of being the king's physician in the colony, was no better than a fool, a drunkard and a rogue, who sold the king's drugs and appropriated the money to his own purposes."

Authors, who have written on the structure of man, have said that if his features were closely examined, there would be found in them a strange resemblance with some of the animals, of the birds, or of the reptiles that people this globe. I remember having seen curious engravings exemplifying this assertion with the most wonderful effect. In a moral sense, the resemblance is perhaps greater, and the whale, the lion, the eagle, the wolf, the lamb, and other varieties of the brutish creation, may, without much examination, be discovered to exist, physically and spiritually, in the human species. Among the bipeds that are reckoned to belong to the ranks of humanity, none was better calculated than La Salle to personate the toad. His mission was to secrete venom, as the rose exhales perfumes. Nature delights in contrarieties. Fat, short, and sleek, with bloated features and oily skin, he was no unfit representative of that reptile, although certainly to him the traditionary legend of a jewel in the head could not be applied. Puffed up in self-conceit, an eternal smile of contentment was stereotyped on the gross

texture of his lips, where it was mixed with an expression of bestial sensuality. His cold grayish eyes had the dull squint of the hog, and as he strutted along, one was almost amazed not to hear an occasional grunt. This thing of the neuter gender, which, to gift with the faculty of speech, seemed to be an injustice done to the superior intellect of the baboon, did, forsooth, think itself an orator. Whenever this royal commissary had a chance of catching a few of the colonists together, for instance, on all public occasions, he would gradually drop the tone of conversation, and sublimate his colloquial address into a final harangue. Thus, the valves of his brazen throat being open, out ran the muddy water of his brain, bespattering all that stood within reach. Pitched on a high and monotonous key, his prosy voice carried to his hearers, for hours, the same insane, insipid flow of bombastic phrases, falling on the ear with the unvaried and ever-recurring sound of a pack-horse wheel in a flour-mill. A coiner of words, he could have filled with them the vaults of the vastest mint; but if analyzed and reduced to their sterling value, they would not have produced a grain of sense. This man, contemptible as he was, had actually become a public nuisance, on account of the impediments with which he embarrassed the administration of Louisiana. He was eternally meddling with every thing, under the pretext of correcting abuses, and although he was incapable of producing any thing of his own that could stand on its legs for a minute, he was incessantly concocting some plan, as ill-begotten as his own misshapen person. He was, in his own delirious opinion, as complete a financier, as skillful a statesman, as great a general, and, above all, as profound a legislator, as ever lived; so that this legislative Caliban had even gone so far as to imagine he could frame a code of laws for the

colony ; and, because all his preposterous propositions were resisted by Bienville, he had conceived for him the bitterest hatred. To do him justice, it must be said that he was in earnest, when he reproached others with malversation and every sort of malfeasances. There are creatures whose accusations it would be wrong to resent. They see themselves reflected in others, and, like yelping curs, pursue with their barkings the sinful image : it would be as idle to expect them to understand the workings of a noble heart and of a great mind, as it would be to imagine that a worm could raise itself to the conception of a planet's gravitations.

So, perhaps, thought Bienville, and he passed with silent contempt over La Salle's manœuvres. Was he not right? He who thinks himself your adversary, but who, if you were to turn upon him with the flashes of honest indignation, with the uplifted spear of physical and mental power united, with the threatening aspect of what he does not possess and dreams not of, a soul, convulsed into a storm, would shrink into an atom and flatten himself to the level of your heels, can not be a real adversary : his enmity is to be regarded as a vain shadow, the phantom of impotent envy. This is no doubt the most dignified course to be pursued, but perhaps not the most prudent ; and Bienville soon discovered that, however it may be in theory, there is, in practice, no attack so pitiful as not to require some sort of precautionary defense. Thus on the 13th of July, 1707, the minister dismissed Bienville from office, appointed De Muys in his place, and instructed this new governor to examine into the administration of his predecessor, and into the accusations brought against him, with the authorization of sending him prisoner to France, if they were well founded. A poor chance it was for Bienville, to be judged by the man that pushed him from his stool, and

whose continuance in office would probably depend upon the guilt of the accused! This was but a sorry return for the services of Bienville and for those of his distinguished family. But thus goes the world!

La Salle had no cause to triumph over the downfall of Bienville, for he himself was, at the same time, dismissed from office, and was succeeded by Diron d'Artaquette. Nay, he had the mortification of seeing Bienville retain his power, while he lost his; because De Muys never reached Louisiana, having died in Havana, on his way to the colony of which he had been appointed governor. To increase his vexation, he saw that most of the colonists, even those who had been momentarily opposed to Bienville, became suddenly alive to his merits, when they were on the eve of losing him, and with spontaneous unanimity subscribed a petition, by which they expressed their satisfaction with Bienville's administration, and supplicated the minister not to deprive them of such a wise and faithful governor. This was sufficiently distressing for La Salle's envious heart; but his spleen was worked into a paroxysm of rage, when he was informed that his successor, the royal commissary, Diron d'Artaquette, had made a report to the king, in which he declared, that all the accusations brought against Bienville, were mere slanderous inventions, which rested on no other foundation than the blackest malice. Writhing like a snake under the unexpected blow, he still attempted to sting, and he wrote to France, "that d'Artaquette was not deserving of any faith or credit; that he had come to an understanding with Bienville, and that they were both equally bad and corrupt."

It was by such misunderstandings among the chiefs of the colony, that its progress was checked so long. In 1708, its population did not exceed 279 persons.

To this number must be added sixty Canadian vagabonds, who led a wandering and licentious life among the Indians. Its principal wealth consisted in 50 cows, 40 calves, 4 bulls, 8 oxen, 1400 hogs, and 2000 hens. This statement shows the feebleness of the colony after an existence of nine years. But the golden eggs had been laid in the land, and although kept torpid and unprofitable for more than a century, by the chilling contact of an imbecile despotism, they, in the progress of time, were hatched by the warm incubation of liberty into the production of that splendid order of things, which is the wonder of the present age.

But, at that time, the colony seemed to be gifted with little vitality, and the nursling of Bienville threatened to expire in his hands at every moment. The colonists were little disposed to undertake the laborious task of securing their subsistence by the cultivation of the soil, and they expected that the mother country would minister to all their wants. Servile hands would have been necessary, but Indian slavery was not found to be profitable, and Bienville wrote to his government to obtain the authorization of exchanging Indians for negroes with the French West India Islands. "We shall give," said he, "three Indians for two negroes. The Indians, when in the islands, will not be able to run away, the country being unknown to them, and the negroes will not dare to become fugitives in Louisiana, because the Indians would kill them." This demand met with no favorable reception. Bienville was so anxious to favor the development of the colony, that he was led by it into an unjust and despotic measure, as is proved by the following extract from one of his dispatches. "I have ordered several citizens of La Rochelle to be closely watched, because they wish to quit the country. They have scraped up something by

keeping taverns. Therefore it appears to me to be nothing but justice to force them to remain in the country, on the substance of which they have fattened." This sentiment, howsoever it may disagree with our modern notions of right and wrong, was not repugnant to the ethics of the time.

In spite of the spirited exertions of Bienville, famine reappeared in the colony, and in January, 1709, the inhabitants were reduced to live on acorns. As usual under such circumstances, the intestine dissensions of which such a melancholy description has been already given became more acrid. The minds of men are not apt to grow conciliating under the double infliction of disappointment and famine, and the attacks upon Bienville were renewed with more than usual fierceness. La Salle, although now stripped of the trappings of office, still remained in the colony, to pursue his game, and to force the noble lord of the forest to stand at bay. His associate in persecution, the Curate de la Vente, hallooed with him in zealous imitation, and it is much to be regretted that they were joined in the chase by Marigny de Mandeville, a brave and noble-minded officer, lately come to the country, who informed his government "that the colony never would prosper until it had a governor with an honest heart and with an energetic mind;" which meant that Bienville was deficient in both. It was an error committed by Marigny de Mandeville, and into which he was no doubt led by the misrepresentations of La Salle and of the Curate de la Vente.

Bienville had so far remained passive, but was at last stung into angry recriminations, which he retorted on all his adversaries, particularly on the Curate de la Vente, who, said he, "*had tried to stir up every body against him by his calumnies, and who, in the mean*

*time, did not blush to keep an open shop, where his mode of trafficking showed that he was a shrewd compound of the Arab and of the Jew."*

The scarcity of provisions became such in 1710, that Bienville informed his government that he had scattered the greatest part of his men among the Indians, upon whom he had quartered them for food. This measure had been more than once adopted before, and demonstrates that the Indians could hardly have been so hostile as they have been represented ; otherwise, they would have availed themselves of such opportunities to destroy the invaders of their territory. Be it as it may, the colony continued in its lingering condition, gasping for breath in its cradle, until 1712, when, on the 14th of September, the King of France granted to Anthony Crozat the exclusive privilege, for fifteen years, of trading in all that immense territory which, with its undefined limits, France claimed as her own under the name of Louisiana. Among other privileges, were those of sending, once a year, a ship to Africa for negroes and of possessing and working all the mines of precious metals to be discovered in Louisiana, provided that one fourth of their proceeds should be reserved for the king. He also had the privilege of owning forever all the lands that he would improve by cultivation, all the buildings he would erect, and all the manufactures that he might establish. His principal obligation, in exchange for such advantages, was to send every year to Louisiana, two ships' loads of colonists, and, after nine years, to assume all the expenses of the administration of the colony, including those of the garrison and of its officers ; it being understood that, in consideration of such a charge, he would have the privilege of nominating the officers to be appointed by the king. In the mean time, the annual sum of fifty thousand livres



( $\$10,000$ ) was allowed to Crozat for the king's share of the expenses required by Louisiana. It was further provided that the laws, ordinances, customs, and usages of the Prevostship and Viscounty of Paris should form the legislation of the colony. There was also to be a government council, similar to the one established in San Domingo and Martinique.

This charter of concessions virtually made Crozat the supreme lord and master of Louisiana. Thus Louisiana was dealt with, as if it had been a royal farm, and leased by Louis the XIVth to the highest bidder. It is a mere business transaction, but which colors itself with the hue of romance, when it is remembered that Louisiana was the farm, Louis the XIVth the landlord, and that Anthony Crozat was the farmer.

Anthony Crozat was one of those men who dignify commerce, and recall to memory those princely merchants, of whom Genoa, Venice, and Florence boasted of yore. Born a peasant's son, on the estate of one of the great patricians of France, he was, when a boy, remarked for the acuteness of his intellect; and having the good fortune of being the foster brother of the only son of his feudal lord, he was sent to school by his noble patron, received the rudiments of education, and at fifteen was placed, as clerk, in a commercial house. Then, by the protection of that nobleman, who never ceased to evince the liveliest interest in his fate, and particularly by the natural ascendancy of his strong genius, he rose, in the course of twenty years, to be a partner of his old employer, married his daughter, and shortly after this auspicious event, found himself, on the death of his father-in-law, one of the richest merchants in Europe. He still continued to be favored by circumstances, and having had the good fortune of loaning large sums of money to the government in cases



of emergency, he was rewarded for his services by his being ennobled and created Marquis du Chatel.

So far, Crozat had known but the sunny side of life ; but for every man the hour of trial must strike, sooner or later, on the clock of fate, and the length or intenseness of the felicity that one has enjoyed, is generally counterbalanced by a proportionate infliction of calamity. Happy is he, perhaps, whom adversity meets on the threshold of existence, and accompanies through part of his career. Then, the nerves of youth may resist the shock, and be even improved by the struggle. The mind and body, disciplined by the severe trial through which they have passed, have time to substitute gains for losses in the account book of life. At any rate, when the tribute of tears and sufferings is early paid, the debtor may hope for a clear and bright meridian ; and when the sun of his destiny sinks down in the west, he has some right to expect, if clouds should gather round the setting orb, that it will only be to gladden the sight by the gorgeousness of their colors. But if smiling fortune, after having rocked her favorite in his cradle, gives him her uninterrupted attendance until his manhood is past, she is very apt to desert him on the first cold approach of old age, when he is most in need of her support ; for, the stern decree that man is born to suffer, must be accomplished before the portals of another life are open ; and then, woe to the gray-headed victim, who, after long days of luxurious ease, finds himself suddenly abandoned, a martyr in the arena of judgment, to the fangs and jaws of the wild beasts of an unfeeling and scoffing world. Woe to him, if his Christian faith is not bound to his heart by adamant chains, to subdue physical pain, to arm his soul with divine fortitude, and grace his last moments with sweet dignity and calm resignation !

Crozat was doomed to make this sad experiment. The first shaft aimed at him fell on his wife, whom he lost, ten years after the birth of his only child, a daughter, now the sole hope of his house. Intense was his sorrow, and never to be assuaged, for no common companion his wife had been. Looking up to him with affectionate reverence as one, whom the laws, both divine and human, had appointed as her guide, she had lived rather in him than in herself. She had been absorbed into her husband, and the business of her whole life had been to study and to anticipate his wishes and wants. Endowed with all the graces of her sex, and with a cultivated intellect chastened by modesty, which hardly left any thing to be desired for its perfection, she rendered sweeter the part of ministering angel which she had assumed, to bless him in this world. With feminine art, she had incorporated herself with his organization, and gliding into the very essence of his soul, she had become the originating spring of all his thoughts and sentiments. It was beautiful to see, how, entwining herself round his conceptions, his volition and actions, she had made herself a component part of his individuality, so that she really was flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone. Is it to be wondered at, that when she died, he felt that the luminary which lighted up his path had been extinguished, and that a wheel had suddenly stopped within himself? From that fatal event, there never was a day when the recollections of the past did not fill his soul with anguish.

Crozat's only consolation was his daughter. The never-ceasing anxiety with which he watched over her, until she grew into womanhood, would beggar all description; and even then she remained a frail flower, which, to be kept alive, required to be fanned by the gentlest zephyrs, and to be softly watered from that

spring which gushes from the deep well of the heart, at the touch of true affection. She was exquisitely beautiful, but there was this peculiarity in her beauty, that although her person presented that voluptuous symmetry, that rich fullness of form, and that delicate roundness of outline which artists admire, yet soul predominated in her so much over matter, that she looked rather like a spirit of the air, than an incarnation of mortality. She produced the effect of an unnatural apparition: forgetting the fascinations of the flesh, one would gaze at her as something not of this world, and feel for her such love as angels may inspire. She appeared to be clothed in terrestrial substance, merely because it was necessary to that earthly existence which she wore as a garment not intended for her, and which had been put on only by mistake. She was out of place: there was something in her organization, which disqualified her for the companionship of the sons of Eve: she looked as if she had strayed from a holier sphere. Those who knew her were impressed with an undefinable feeling that she was a temporary loan made to earth by heaven, and that the slightest disappointment of the heart in her nether career, would send her instantly to a fitter and more congenial abode. Alas! there are beings invested with such exquisite sensibility, that the vile clay which enters into their composition, and which may be intended as a protecting texture, without which human life would be intolerable for the spirit within, imbibing too much of the ethereal essence to which it is allied, ceases to be a shield against the ills we are heirs to, in this valley of miseries. It is a mark set upon them! It is a pledge that the wounded soul, writhing under repeated inflictions, will wear out its frail tenement, and soon escape from its ordeal. Such was the threatened fate of An-

drea, the daughter of Crozat. And he knew it, the poor father! he knew it, and he trembled! and he lived in perpetual fear: and he would clasp his hands, and in such agonies as the paternal heart only knows, kneeling down, humbling himself in the dust, he would pour out prayers (oh, how eloquent!) that the Almighty, in his infinite mercy, would spare his child!

Crozat had sedulously kept up the closest relations with his noble friend and patron, to whom there had also been born but one heir, a son, the sole pillar of a ducal house, connected with all the imperial and royal dynasties of Europe. A short time after his wife's death, Crozat had had the misfortune to follow to the grave the duke, his foster brother; and his daughter Andrea, who was known to lack at home the gentle nursing of a mother, had been tendered the splendid hospitality of the dowager duchess, where she had grown up in a sort of sisterly intimacy with the young duke. There she had conceived, unknowingly to herself at first, the most intense passion for her youthful companion, which, when it revealed itself to her dismayed heart, was kept carefully locked up in its inmost recesses. Poor maiden! The *longum bibere amorem* was fatally realized with her, and she could not tear herself from the allurements of the banquet upon which she daily feasted her affections. Unknown her secret, she lived in fancied security, and, for a while, enjoyed as pure a happiness as may be attained to—the happiness of dreams!

One day, a rumor arose that a matrimonial alliance was in the way of preparation for that lineal descendant of a princely race, for the young duke, who was the concealed idol of her heart. There are emotions which it would be too much for human endurance to hide from a sympathetic eye, much less from parental penetration,

and on that day the terrible truth burst upon Crozat, and stunned him with an unexpected blow. It was a hurricane of woes sweeping through his heart: he felt as if he and his child were in a tornado, out of which to save her was impossible. Too well he knew his Andrea, and too well he knew that she would not survive the withering of her hopes, wild as they were! "Time!" exclaimed he, as he paced his room with hurried steps, holding communion with himself, "Time, that worker of great things, must be gained! But how?" A sudden thought flashed through his brain! Thank God, he clutched the remedy! Was it not currently reported and believed that the betrothed of the duke loved one, of equally noble birth, but whose proffered hand had been rejected by an ambitious father, merely because fortune, with her golden gifts, did not back his pretensions? That was enough! And Crozat, on that very day, had sought and found the despairing lover. "Sir!" said he to the astonished youth, "in the civil wars which desolated France during the minority of Louis the XIVth, and which ruined your family, several millions were extorted from your father by one, who then had the power. Here they are—it is a restitution—ask no name—I am a mere agent and bound to secrecy." The strange tale was taken as true, and in a short time the betrothed of the young duke was led to the hymeneal altar by a more successful rival.

Crozat had been a traitor and a liar!—a traitor to his friend and benefactor's son! But he was a father!—and he saw his daughter's tomb already wide open and gaping for the expected prey! And was she not to be rescued at any cost? And was he to stand with folded arms, and to remain passive, while, in his sight, despair slowly chiseled the cold sepulchral marble destined for his child? No!—he saved her, and did not

stop to inquire whether the means he employed were legitimate. Now, he saw her smile again and resume, as it were, that current of life which was fast ebbing away!—and he was happy! And had he not a sufficient excuse to plead at that seat of judgment which every man has within his breast, when the shrill voice of conscience rose against him in accusation, and said, “Thou hast done wrong! to save thyself, or thine, thou hast been recreant to thy trust—thou hast injured thy neighbor, and acted dishonorably?” Crozat, however, was not the man to lay a flattering unction to his soul. There was in him no false logic of a corrupt mind to argue successfully against the plain voice of truth: his were not the ears of the wicked, deaf to the admonitions of our inward monitor. However gently conscience might have spoken her disapprobation, he heard it, and stood self-condemned.

He went to his patron's widow, to the duchess, and told her *all*—and prostrating himself at her feet, awaited her sentence. She raised him gently from his humble posture, and self-collected, soaring as it were above human passions, while she riveted upon him the steadfast look of her calm, blue eyes, thus she spoke with Juno-like dignity, and with a sweet, musical voice, but seeming as cold to the afflicted father, in spite of its bland intonations, as the northern wind: “Crozat, this is a strange and a moving tale. You stand forgiven, for you have acted as nature would prompt most men to do, and even if your error had been more grievous, your manly candor and frank confession would redeem the guilt. Therefore, let it pass; let your conscience be relieved from further pangs on this subject. My esteem and friendship stand the same for you as before. What grieves me to the heart, is the deplorable situation of your Andrea, who is mine also, and whom I love like

a daughter, although she can not be permitted to assume such a relation to me in the eye of the world. She is young, and it shall be our special care, by gentle means, to cure her by degrees of the wild passion which has possessed her soul, poor child. As this, our first conversation on this painful topic, shall be the last, I wish to express my sentiments to you with sufficient fullness, that I may be clearly understood. I wish you to know, that my heart is not inflated with vulgar pride. I do not think that my blood is different from yours in its composition, and is noble solely because I descend from a particular breed, and that yours is vile, because the accidental circumstance of birth has placed you among the plebeians and what we call the base and the low-born. A peasant's son, if he be virtuous and great in soul and in mind, is more in my estimation than a king's, if an idiot or a wicked man. Thus far, I suppose, we understand each other. There is but one valuable nobility—that in which hereditary rank is founded on a long succession of glorious deeds. Such is the case with our house. It has been an historical one, trunk and branches, for much more than twelve centuries. Kings, emperors, claim a kindred blood with ours. Our name is indissolubly bound with the history of Europe and Asia, and the annals of the kingdom of France, in particular, may be said to be the records of our house. We have long ceased to count the famous knights, the high constables, the marshals, generals, and other great men who have sprung from our fruitful race. This is what I call nobility. To this present day, none of that race has ever contracted an alliance which was not of an illustrious and historical character. It is a principle, nay more, Crozat, it is a religion with us, and it is too late for us to turn apostates. It is to that creed, which we have cherished



from time immemorial, that we are indebted for what we are. If once untrue to ourselves, there is an instinctive presentiment which tells us that we shall be blasted with the curse of heaven. Right or wrong, it is a principle, I say; and there is such mysterious vitality and power in a principle, be it what it may, that if strictly and systematically adhered to for ages, it will work wonders. Therefore the traditions of our house must stand unbroken forever, coeval with its existence, and remain imperishable pyramids of our faith in our own worth.

“I know that your daughter, whom I have raised in my lap, and whose transcendent qualities I appreciate as they deserve, would be the best of wives, and bless my son with earthly bliss. But, Crozat, those of my race are not born to be happy, but to be great. This is the condition of their existence. They do not marry for themselves, but for the glorification of their house. It is a sacred mission, and it must be fulfilled. Every animated thing in the creation must follow the bent of its nature. The wooing dove may be satisfied with the security of its lot in the verdant foliage of the forest, but the eagle must speed to the sun, even if he be consumed by its rays. Such being the fate of our race, a hard one in many respects, you see, my dear Crozat—and I say so with deep regret at the consequences which you anticipate, not however without a hope that they may be averted—you must clearly see that an alliance between our families is an impossibility. It would be fatal to your daughter, who would be scorched by ascending, Phaeton-like, into a sphere not calculated for her; and it would be also fatal to my son, who would be disgraced for his being recreant to his ancestors and to his posterity. You deserve infinite credit for having risen to the summit where you now stand. You have



been ennobled, and you are one of the greatest merchants of the age, but you are not yet a Medici! You have not forced your way, like that family, into the ranks of the potentates of the earth. If, indeed—but why talk of such idle dreams? Adieu, Crozat, be comforted—be of good cheer.—Things may not be as bad as you think for your daughter. Her present attachment not being encouraged, she may in time form another one. Farewell, my friend, put your faith in God: he is the best healer of the wounds of the heart!”

Crozat bowed low to the duchess, whose extended hand he kissed reverentially, and he withdrew from the chilling frigidity of her august presence. Crouching under the weight of his misfortune, and under the consciousness of the invincible and immortal pride he had to deal with, he tottered to his solitary room, and sinking into a large gothic chair, buried his feverish head into his convulsive hands. Hot tears trickled through the contracted fingers, and he sobbed and groaned aloud, when he recalled, one by one, all the words of the duchess, as they slowly fell from her lips, burning his soul, searing his brains, filtering through his heart like distilled drops of liquid fire. Suddenly he started up with fierce energy; his face was lighted with dauntless resolution: he ground his teeth, clenched his fist, as if for a struggle, and shook it in defiance of some invisible adversary, while he moved on with expanded chest and with a frame dilating into the majesty of some imaginary command. “O Daughter,” he exclaimed, “thou shalt be saved, and if necessary, I will accomplish impossibilities. Did not the proud duchess say that if I were a Medici! . . . the ruler of provinces!—if I had an historical name? She did! and I know that she would keep her word. Well then! ye powers of heaven or hell, that helped the Medici, I bow

to ye, and call ye to my aid, by the only incantation which I know, the strong magic of an energetic mind. I invoke your assistance, be the sacrifice on my part whatever it may:—I will sign any bond ye please—I will set my all on the cast of a die—and gamble against fate. My daughter is the stake, and death to her and to me the forfeit !” This was a sinful ebullition of passion—the only excuse the paroxysm of a delirious mind. But still it was impious, and his protecting angel averted his face and flew upward. Alas ! poor Crozat !

Hence the origin of that charter, by which Louisiana was ceded, as it were, to Crozat. He flattered himself with the hope that, if successful in his gigantic enterprise, a few years might ripen the privileges he had obtained into the concession of a principality, which he would form in the New World, a principality which, as a great feudatory vassal, he would hold in subjection to the crown of France. Then he would say to the proud duchess, “I am a Medici. My name outweighs many a haughty one in the scales of history:—my nobility rests not only on title, but on noble deeds. These were your words—I hold you to them—redeem your pledge—one of your blood can not be false—I claim your son—I give him a princess for his bride, and domains ten times broader than France, or any kingdom in Europe, for her dowry !”

So hoped the heart of the father—so schemed the head of the great merchant ! What man ever had stronger motives to fire his genius ? What ambition more sacred and more deserving of reward than his ? And yet none, save one, guessed at the motives which actuated him ! He was taxed with being insatiable of wealth : people wondered at his gigantic avidity. Some there were, who shrugged their shoulders, and

said that he was tempting fate, that it was time for him to be satisfied with what he had, without exposing his present wonderful acquisitions for the uncertainty of a greater fortune. Such are the blind judgments of the world! Crozat was blamed for being too ambitious, and envy railed at the inordinate avidity of the rash adventurer, when pity ought to have wept over the miseries of the broken-hearted father. On the dizzy eminence whither he had ascended, Crozat, when he looked round for sympathy, was met by the basilisk stare of a jealous, cold-blooded world, who stood by, calculating his chances of success, and grinning in anticipation at the wished-for failure of his defeated schemes. At such a sight, his heart sank within his breast, and elevating his hands, clasped in prayer, "Angels and ministers of grace," he said, "ye know that it is no ambitious cravings, but the racked feelings of a father, that urge me to the undertaking, upon which I call down your blessings. Be ye my friends and protectors in heaven, for Crozat has none on this earth."

## FOURTH LECTURE.

LAMOTHE CADILLAC, GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA—SITUATION OF THE COLONY IN 1718  
—FEUD BETWEEN CADILLAC AND BIENVILLE—CHARACTER OF RICHELBOURG—  
FIRST EXPEDITION AGAINST THE NATCHEZ—DE L'EPINAY SUCCEEDS CADILLAC—  
THE CURATE DE LA VENTE—EXPEDITION OF ST. DENIS TO MEXICO—HIS AD-  
VENTURES—JALLOT, THE SURGEON—IN 1717 CROZAT GIVES UP HIS CHARTER—  
HIS DEATH.

WHEN Crozat obtained the royal charter, granting him so many commercial privileges in Louisiana, the military forces which were in the colony, and which constituted its only protection, did not exceed two companies of infantry of fifty men each. There were also seventy-five Canadians in the pay of the king, and they were used for every species of service. The balance of the population hardly came up to three hundred souls, and that population, small as it was, and almost imperceptible, happened to be scattered over a boundless territory, where they could not communicate together without innumerable difficulties, frightful dangers, and without delays which, in these our days of rapid locomotion, can scarcely be sufficiently appreciated. As to the blacks, who now have risen to such importance in our social polity, they did not number more than twenty heads. It is probable, that of this scanty population, there were not fifty persons in the present limits of the State of Louisiana, and the contrast, which now presents itself to the mind, affords a rich treat to the imagination, and particularly to our

national pride, since we were the wonder-working power.

The possession of the province of Louisiana, if possession it can be called, France had secured by the construction of five forts. They were located at Mobile, at Biloxi, Ship Island, Dauphine Island, and on the bank of the Mississippi. These fortifications were of a very humble nature, and their materials were chiefly composed of stakes, logs, and clay. They sufficed, however, to intimidate the Indians. Such were the paltry results, after fifteen years, of the attempt made by a powerful government to colonize Louisiana ; and now, one single man, a private individual, was daring enough to grapple and struggle with an undertaking, which, so far, had proved abortive in the hands of the great Louis the XIVth !

It must be remembered that De Muys, who had been appointed to supersede Bienville, had died in Havana in 1707, and that the youthful founder of the colony had, by that event, remained Governor *ad interim* of Louisiana. But on the 17th of May, 1713, a great change had come over the face of things, and the colonists stood on the tiptoe of expectation, when they were informed that a ship had arrived with Lamothe Cadillac, as Governor, Duclos as Commissary in the place of D'Artaguet, who had returned to France, Lebas as Comptroller, Dirigoin and La Loire des Ursins, as the agents of Crozat in the colony. Bienville was retained as Lieutenant Governor, and it was expected that, in that subordinate office, he would, from his knowledge of the state of affairs in the province, be of signal use to his successor, and be a willing instrument, which the supposed superior abilities of Lamothe Cadillac would turn to some goodly purpose. This certainly was a compliment paid to the patriotism of Bienville, but

was it not disregarding too much the frailties of human nature? Cheerfully to obey, where one formerly had nothing to do but to issue the word of command, is not an every-day occurrence, and it is a trial to which politic heads ought not to expose the virtue of man.

The principal instructions given by Crozat to Lamothe Cadillac were, that he should diligently look after *mines*, and endeavor to find out an opening for the introduction of his goods and merchandise into the Spanish colonies in Mexico, either with the consent of the authorities, or without it, by smuggling. If he succeeded in these two enterprises, Crozat calculated that he would speedily obtain inexhaustible wealth, such wealth as would enable him to throw a large population into Louisiana, as it were by magic, and to realize the fond dreams of his paternal heart. Impatient of delay, he had, in order to stimulate the exertions of Lamothe Cadillac, secured to him a considerable share in the profits which he hoped to realize. Lamothe Cadillac had fought with valor in Canada, and as a reward for his services (so, at least, his commission declared), had been appointed by the king, governor of Louisiana. Had Crozat known the deficiencies of that officer's intellect, he, no doubt, would have strongly remonstrated against such a choice.

Lamothe Cadillac was born on the banks of the Garonne, in the province of Gascony, in France. He was of an ancient family, which for several centuries, had, by some fatality or other, been rapidly sliding down from the elevated position which it had occupied. When Lamothe Cadillac was ushered into life, the domains of his ancestors had, for many past generations, been reduced to a few acres of land. That small estate was dignified, however, with an old dilapidated edifice, which bore the name of *castle*, although, at a

distance, to an unprejudiced eye, it presented some unlucky resemblance to a barn. A solitary tower dressed, as it were, in a gown of moss and ivy, raised its gray head to a height which might have been called respectable, and which appeared to offer special attraction to crows, swallows, and bats. Much to the mortification of the present owner, it had been called by the young wags of the neighborhood, "*Cadillac's Rookery*," and was currently known under this ungenteel appellation. Cadillac had received a provincial and domestic education, and had, to his twenty-fifth year, moved in a very contracted sphere. Nay, it may be said that he had almost lived in solitude, for he had lost both his parents, when hardly eighteen summers had passed over his head, and he had since kept company with none but the old tutor to whom he was indebted for such classical attainments as he had acquired. His mind being as much curtailed in its proportions, as his patrimonial acres, his intellectual vision could not extend very far, and if Cadillac was not literally a dunce, it was well known that Cadillac's wits would never run away with him.

Whether it was owing to this accidental organization of his brain, or not, certain it is that one thing afforded the most intense delight to Cadillac:—it was, that no blood so refined as his own ran in the veins of any other human being, and that his person was the very incarnation of nobility. With such a conviction rooted in his heart, it is not astonishing that his tall, thin, and emaciated body should have stiffened itself into the most accurate observation of the perpendicular. Indeed, it was exceedingly pleasant and exhilarating to the lungs, to see Cadillac, on a Sunday morning, strutting along in full dress, on his way to church, through the meager village attached to his hereditary domain.

His bow to the mayor and to the curate was something rare, an exquisite burlesque of infinite majesty, thawing into infinite affability. His ponderous wig, the curls of which spread like a peacock's tail, seemed to be alive with conscious pride at the good luck it had of covering a head of such importance to the human race. His eyes, in whose favor nature had been pleased to deviate from the oval into the round shape, were possessed with a stare of astonishment, as if they meant to convey the expression that the spirit within was in a trance of stupefaction at the astounding fact that the being it animated did not produce a more startling effect upon the world. The physiognomy which I am endeavoring to depict, was rendered more remarkable by a stout, cocked up, snub nose, which looked as if it had hurried back, in a fright, from the lips, to squat in rather too close proximity to the eyes, and which, with its dilated nostrils, seemed always on the point of sneezing at something thrusting itself between the wind and its nobility. His lips wore a mocking smile, as if sneering at the strange circumstance that a Cadillac should be reduced to be an obscure, penniless individual. But, if Cadillac had his weak points, it must also be told that he was not without his strong ones. Thus, he had a great deal of energy, bordering, it is true, upon obstinacy;—he was a rigidly moral and pious man;—and he was too proud not to be valiant.

With a mind so framed, was it to be wondered at that Cadillac deemed it a paramount duty to himself and to his Maker, not to allow his race to become extinct? Acting under a keen sense of this duty, and impressed with a belief that he might, by a rich alliance, restore his house to that ancient splendor which he considered as its birthright, but of which evil tongues said, that it was indeed so truly ancient, that it had long



ceased to be recorded in the memory of man, he, one day, issued in state and in his gayest apparel, from his feudal tower, and for miles around, paid formal visits to all the wealthy patricians of his neighborhood. He was everywhere received with that high-bred courtesy, which those of that class extend to all, and particularly to such as belong to their own order, but he was secretly voted a quizz. After a few months' of ineffectual efforts, Cadillac returned to his pigeon-hole, in the most disconsolate mood; and, after a year's repining, he was forced to content himself with the hand of a poor spinster, who dwelt in a neighboring town, where, like Cadillac, she lingered in all the pride of unsullied descent and hereditary poverty. Shortly after her marriage, the lady, who was a distant relation to the celebrated Duke of Lauzun, recommended herself and her husband to the patronage of that nobleman, who was then one of the brightest of that galaxy of stars that adorned the court of Louis the XIVth. Her letter was written in a quaint, fantastic style, and Lauzun, who received it on his way to the king's morning levee, showed it to the monarch, and was happy enough, by the drollery of his comments, to force a smile from those august lips. Availing himself of that smile, Lauzun, who was in one of his good fits, for the kindness of his nature was rather problematical, and the result of accident rather than of disposition, obtained for his poor connection the appointment of captain to one of the companies of infantry, which had been ordered to Canada.

The reception of this favor, with a congratulatory letter from Lauzun, added stilts to Cadillac's pomposity, and his few dependents and vassals became really astounded at the sublimity of his attitudes. On that occasion, the increased grandeur of his habitual carriage was but the translation of the magnificence of

his cogitations. He had heard of the exploits of Cortez and Pizarro, and he came to the logical conclusion, in his own mind, that Canada would be as glorious a field as Peru or Mexico, and that he would at least rival the achievements of the Spanish heroes. Fame and wealth were at last within his grasp, and the long-eclipsed star of the Cadillacs would again blaze out with renewed luster!

The dreams of Cadillac were soon put to flight by sad realities, when he landed in Canada, where hardships of every kind assailed him. The snows and blasts of Siberian winters, the heat of summers equal to those of Africa, endless marches and counter-marches after a wary and perfidious enemy, visible only when he could attack with tenfold chances in his favor, the sufferings of hunger and thirst which were among the ordinary privations of his every-day life, the wants of civilization so keenly felt amid all the destitution of savage existence, days of bodily and mental labor, and nights of anxious vigil, hair-breadth escapes on water and on land, the ever-recurring danger of being tomahawked and scalped, the war-whoops and incessant attacks of the Indians, the honorable distinctions of wounds and of a broken constitution in the service of his country—these were the concomitants and the results of Cadillac's career in Canada during twenty years! All this Cadillac had supported with remarkable fortitude, although not without impatience, wondering all the time that something or other did not happen to make him what he thought nature and his birth intended and entitled him to be—a great man!

But twenty years had elapsed, and at their expiration, he found himself no better than a lieutenant-colonel. To increase his vexation, he had no other issue by his marriage than a daughter, now eighteen years of age,

and thus he remained without the prospect of having an heir to continue his line, and to bear his noble name. The disappointment of his hopes in this respect was the keenest of all his afflictions; he was approaching the trying climacteric of fifty-four, and he was as poor as when he departed from the banks of the Garonne. A lieutenant-colonel he was, and would remain, in all probability. His superior officer seemed to be marvelously tenacious of his post and of life, and would neither die nor advance one step beyond his grade: bullets spared him, and ministers never thought of his promotion. Thus it was clear, from all appearances, that Cadillac was not in a position soon to become a marshal of France, and that Canada was not the land where he could acquire that wealth he was so ambitious of, to enshrine his old gray-headed tower, as a curious relic of the feudal power of his ancestry, within the splendid architecture of a new palace, and to revive the glories of his race. Hence he had imbibed the most intense contempt for the barren country where so much of his life had been spent in vain, and he would sneer at the appellation of *New France* given to Canada; he thought it was a disparagement to the beautiful and noble kingdom of which he boasted to be a native, and he frequently amused his brother officers with his indignation on this subject. "This world may revolve on its axis to all eternity," he would say, "and Canada will no more be made to resemble France, than a dwarf will ever be the personification of a giant!" This was a favorite phrase with which he loved to close his complaints against the object of his abomination, whenever he was betrayed into an expression of his feelings; for of late, he had become silent and moody, and only talked when he could not do otherwise. It was evident that his mind was wrapped up within itself, and absorbed in the solu-

tion of some problem, or the contemplation of a subject which taxed all its powers of thought. What could it be? But at last it was discovered that the object of Cadillac's abstracted cogitations was the constant blasting of all his hopes, in spite of his mighty efforts to realize them. So strange did it appear to him, that he could come to no other conclusion than that, if he had not risen higher on the stage of life, it was necessarily because he was *spell-bound*.

Cadillac, since his arrival in Canada, had kept up, with the great connection he had acquired by his marriage, the Duke of Lauzun, a regular correspondence, in which, to the infinite glee of that nobleman, he used to enumerate his manifold mishaps. Now, acting under the impression that he was decidedly the victim of fate or witchcraft, he wrote to Lauzun a long letter, in which he surpassed himself in his bombastic style, and out-heroding Herod, poured out on paper, in incoherent declamations, the vexed spirit which ailed him, and cut such antics in black and white, that Lauzun, on the perusal of this epistolary elegy, laughed himself into tears, and almost screamed with delight. It happened, at that time, that the ministry was in search of a governor for Louisiana, and the mischievous Lauzun, who thought that the more he exalted Cadillac, the greater source of merriment he prepared for himself, had sufficient power to have him appointed to that office. This profligate nobleman never troubled his wits about what would become of Louisiana under such an administration. Provided he found out a fit theater, and had it properly illuminated, to enjoy, at his ease, the buffooneries of a favorite actor, what cared he for the rest?

Before taking possession of his government, Cadillac went to France to receive the instructions of the ministry, and to visit his paternal domain. His return pro-

duced no slight sensation within a radius of forty miles round his so long-deserted hearth. If the waggish boys who used to torment him with their pranks had grown into manhood, tradition had handed down so much of Cadillac's peculiarities to their successors, that when he appeared before them, it was not as a stranger, but rather as an old acquaintance. Dressed in the fashion which prevailed at the time he left his native province, twenty years before, and which at present helped to set off with more striking effect the oddities of his body and mind, he was, as before, an object of peculiar attraction to the mischievous propensities of the juvenility of his neighborhood. One of them, still fresh from the university, where he had won academical honors, availing himself, in order to display the powers of his muse, of Cadillac's reappearance at home, composed a ballad which he called "*The Return of the Iroquois Chief*," and which was a parody of a celebrated one, well known as "*The Knight's Return from Palestine*." It met with great success, and was sung more than once under the Gothic windows of Cadillac's tower. But he listened to the sarcastic composition with a smile of ineffable contempt. "Let them laugh at my past misfortunes," he would say to himself; "the future will avenge my wrongs, and my enemies will be jaundiced with the bile of envy. I am now governor of Louisiana, of that favored land, of which so many wonders are related. This is no longer the frozen climate of Canada, but a genial region, which, from its contiguity, must be akin to that of Mexico, where the hot rays of the sun make the earth teem with gold, diamonds, and rubies!" Working himself into a paroxysm of frenzied excitement, he struck passionately, with the palm of his hand, the wall of the room he was pacing to and fro, and exclaimed, "O venerable pile, which derision calls *Cadillac's Rookery*, I will yet make

thee a tower of strength and glory ! I will gild each of thy moss-coated stones, and thou shalt be a tabernacle for men to wonder at and to worship !" As he spoke, his eyes became suffused with tears, and there was so much feeling and pathos in his action, and in the expression of his aspirations, that, for the first time in his life, not only he momentarily ceased to be ridiculous, but, to one who had seen him then, would have appeared not destitute of a certain degree of dignity, and perhaps not unworthy of respectful sympathy. Such is the magic of deep sentiment !

When Cadillac landed on the bleak shore of Dauphine or Massacre Island, what he saw was very far from answering his expectations. From the altitude of flight to which his imagination had risen, it is easy to judge of the rapidity of its precipitate descent. The shock received from its sudden fall, was such as to produce a distraction of the mind, bordering on absolute madness. As soon as Cadillac recovered from the bewildered state of astonishment into which he had been thrown, he sent to the minister of the marine department a description of the country, of which I shall only give this short abstract : "The wealth of Dauphine Island," said he, "consists of a score of fig-trees, three wild pear-trees, and three apple-trees of the same nature, a dwarfish plum-tree, three feet high, with seven bad-looking plums, thirty plants of vine, with nine bunches of half-rotten and half-dried-up grapes, forty stands of French melons, and some pumpkins. This is the terrestrial paradise of which we had heard so much ! Nothing but fables and lies !"

It will be recollected that Lamothe Cadillac had arrived on the 13th of May. He had since been exploring the country, and with his usual sagacity, he passed this remarkable judgment on Lower Louisiana :

"This is a very wretched country, good for nothing, and incapable of producing either tobacco, wheat, or vegetables, even as high as Natchez." It is fortunate that from this oracular decision there has been an appeal, and we now know whether it has been confirmed or annulled.

The 1st of January, 1714, had come in due time, and Cadillac had not allowed his unfavorable opinions of Louisiana to depart with the expiring year, if we may judge from the dispatch in which he said: "The inhabitants are no better than the country; they are the very scum and refuse of Canada, ruffians, who have thus far cheated the gibbet of its due, vagabonds, who are without subordination to the laws, without any respect for religion or for the government, graceless profligates, who are so steeped in vice that they prefer the Indian females to French women! How can I find a remedy for such evils, when his Majesty instructs me to behave with extreme lenity, and in such a manner as not to provoke complaints! But what shall I say of the troops, who are without discipline, and scattered among the Indians, at whose expense they subsist?" Cadillac went on in this strain, in no sparing style, and summed up the whole with this sweeping declaration: "The colony is not worth a straw for the moment; but I shall endeavor to make something of it, if God grants me health."

God granted the worthy governor as robust health as he could have wished, but without enabling him to redeem his word, with regard to bettering the condition of the colony; and at the expiration of the year 1714, Cadillac found out that his situation, as an administrator, was far from being an enviable one. He had quarreled with Dirigoin, one of Crozat's agents, because, if we take his representations as true, that agent was a fool; and



with the comptroller, Lebas, because he, Lebas, was dissipated; with the inhabitants, because they were dissolute and had hitherto refused to build a church, which was a thing not yet to be found in the whole colony; with the soldiers, because they were without discipline; with the officers, and particularly with Bienville, Boisbriant, Chateaugué, and Sérigny, because they neglected to apply for the holy sacrament, even at Easter; with the commissary, Duclos, because the views of that dignitary had differed from his own on more than one occasion; with Richebourg, a captain of dragoons, who had come with him in a ship of the line, because that officer had seduced most of the girls who had embarked with them for Louisiana, and who ought to have been respected; with the girls themselves, because they had suffered their virtue to be seduced, which was the cause of their remaining on his hands, inasmuch as every one refused to marry them on account of their own misconduct. Is it astonishing that, under such untoward circumstances, Cadillac's displeasure at his situation should have swelled into such gigantic proportions as to induce him to allow his gathering indignation to embrace the whole of America within the scope of his animadversion? Is it not to be supposed that his understanding must have been a little confused by his perplexities, when he wrote to the ministry—"Believe me, this whole continent is not worth having, and our colonists are so dissatisfied that they are all disposed to run away?"

The feud between the magnates of the land grew every day more fierce, and the colony presented the aspect of two hostile camps, Trojans and Greeks, tugging in irreconcilable enmity. On one side, there was the governor who was the Agamemnon of his party, and who was backed by Marigny de Mandeville, Bagot, Blondel, Latour, Villiers, and Terrine, scions of noble



houses, and all of them young and brilliant officers, who would have joined in any strife merely for the sake of excitement. The fanatic Curate de la Vente was their Calchas, and stimulated them to the contest. On the other side stood Lieutenant-Governor Bienville, the Hector of the opposition, with the king's commissary Duclos, Boisbriant, Chateaugué, Richebourg, Du Tisé, Sérigny, and others of some note or influence, who were at least fully a match for their antagonists. Thus, on this small theater, the human passions were as keenly at work, and there was as hot a struggle for petty power, as if the stage for their display had been a more elevated one, and the objects of contention more exciting to ambition.

From the annals of the Dutch settlements of New York, or rather from the overflowing richness of his own imagination, which, to be prolific, had only to alight on and to be connected with a favorite subject, Washington Irving drew those humorous sketches, which first gave celebrity to his name. But in the early history of Louisiana, which has nothing to borrow from the fields of fiction, there spring up characters and incidents, fraught with as much originality, and tinged with as much romance, as any so felicitously described by him in his productions, or by other authors in any work of fancy. What writer could pretend, in his most whimsical creations, to produce a being more fantastical than Lamothe Cadillac? What powers of invention could match his style and the sentiments expressed in his letters? But let us follow the erratic course pursued by this eccentric personage.

He had come to Louisiana to acquire sudden wealth by the discovery of mines, and not to superintend and foster the slow and tedious progress of civilization. Hence, it is not to be wondered at, that, on his receiv-

ing, one day, positive orders to assist the agents of Crozat in establishing trading settlements or posts on the Wabash and on the Illinois, he got out of humor, and in a fit of impatience, had the hardihood to write back to the ministry, in these terms: "I have seen Crozat's instructions to his agents. I thought they issued from a lunatic asylum, and there appeared to me to be no more sense in them than in the Apocalypse. What! Is it expected that, for any commercial or profitable purposes, boats will ever be able to run up the Mississippi, into the Wabash, the Missouri, or the Red River? One might as well try *to bite a slice off the moon!* Not only are these rivers as rapid as the Rhone, but in their crooked course, they imitate to perfection a snake's undulations. Hence, for instance, on every turn of the Mississippi, it would be necessary to wait for a change of wind, if wind could be had, because this river is so lined up with thick woods, that very little wind has access to its bed."

As to the ministerial expectations that he should devote most of his time to favoring agricultural pursuits among the colonists, Cadillac took it in high dudgeon, that such recommendations should ever be addressed to him, as if he had not something better to attend to—the discovery of gold, diamonds and pearls! To trouble himself about conceding and locating lands, was a thing concerning which he never admitted the possibility of his being seriously employed, and he treated the matter very lightly in one of his dispatches, in which he said to the ministry, "Give the colonists as much land as they please. Why stint the measure? The lands are so bad that there is no necessity to care for the number of acres. A copious distribution of them would be cheap liberality."

Thus, agriculture and commerce had failed to engage

the sympathies of Cadillac, who, since the first day he landed in Louisiana, had bent all his energies and all the means at his command toward the discovery of mines. He had sent Canadians in every direction to explore for the hidden treasures of the earth, but months had elapsed without gratifying the cravings of Cadillac's appetite for gold. Some of the Canadians had been killed by the Indians:—others found so much amusement in their favorite avocations of fishing and hunting, that they forgot the duties imposed upon them, and for the discharge of which they were paid:—there were more than one who, having gone so far as the Illinois and the Missouri, suddenly bethought themselves of some love-sick maid, some doting mother or aged father, whom they had left pining on the banks of the St. Lawrence, and instead of returning down the Mississippi, to give to Cadillac an account of their mission, they pursued their way up to their native villages. It must be confessed that all were little competent and too ignorant to investigate properly the object of their inquiries. The few who came back had but "a beggarly account of empty boxes" to lay before Cadillac. But if he had been favored with a romantic turn of mind, he would have found some indemnification in the recital of their marvelous adventures.

Cadillac came at last to the conclusion that he was in a sorry predicament. Sancho, when assailed with the cares of his insular government, never felt the tenth part of his embarrassment. So much so, that Cadillac deeply regretted that he could not be forever asleep; because, when awake, he could not but be aware that he had spent all the funds he could command, and had no more left to consecrate to his favorite scheme. The sad reality stared him in the face:—his purse was empty, and his Canadians were gone. But when he

was asleep, his dreams beggared the wonders of the Arabian Nights. Then Queen Mab would drive, four in hand, her tiny cobweb carriage through his brain: some merry elf of her court would tickle his nose with a feather from a humming-bird's tail, and instantly Cadillac would see a thousand fairy miners, extracting from the bowels of the earth and heaping upon its surface enormous piles of gold and silver, having a fantastic resemblance to those Indian mounds which, in our days, make such strong appeals to our curiosity. Heated by these visions, Cadillac addressed himself to Duclos, the king's commissary, for more funds to prosecute his researches after the precious metals for which he thirsted. Duclos replied that the treasury had been pumped dry. "Borrow," answered Cadillac. "I can not," observed Duclos. "Well, then!" said the governor very pithily, "what is the use of your being a financier, if you can not raise money by borrowing, and what is the use of my being a governor, if I have no funds to carry on the purposes of my government!"

Low did Cadillac hang his head, in spite of all his pride, when he found himself so cramped up in his operations. But it would require a more powerful pen than mine to describe his indignation, when Duclos, the king's commissary, requested him to render his accounts for all the funds which had been put in his hands, and for all the goods and trinkets which had been delivered to him for distribution among the Indians. It was long before he could be made to understand what was expected from him, so strange and unnatural to him did *such a pretension*, as Cadillac called it, really seem on the part of the commissary. There was to him something stupendous in the idea that there should ever be the possibility of any such event happening, as that of a commissary calling upon *him*, Cadillac, the noblest

among the noble, *him*, the governor, *him*, the representative of the Lord's anointed, to furnish his accounts, just in the same way that such a call might have been made upon any ordinary biped of the human species. Was not such a pretension the forerunner of some extraordinary convulsion of nature? Be it as it may, Cadillac immediately wrote to the ministry to inform them of this astounding fact, which, in his opinion, was a demonstration of the wild notions that had crept into the colony. Evidently, the commissary was "non compos mentis!"

The tribulations of Cadillac were destined to pursue a progressive course, and he was hardly out of one difficulty, when another and still another came in quick succession, like the ghosts that haunted Macbeth. To increase his perplexities, the troops refused to go through all the duties of their regular service, on the ground that they had nothing to eat but corn, when they were entitled to wheat bread. "A deputation of twenty of them," said Cadillac, in his communications to the ministry, "had the impudence to address me on the subject. I immediately sent the spokesman to prison, and having convened the officers, I told them that the troops in Canada were satisfied with corn for their food, that those in Louisiana had, as I had been informed, lived on it three years, and that I saw no reason why they should not continue. None of the officers dissented from me, except the commissary, who expressed a different opinion, which he supported with the most puerile reasoning: but I chid him and gave him a good rapping on the knuckles."

The spirit of discontent was not confined to the soldiery, but had spread through the minds of the colonists themselves. "They have dared to meet without my permission," said he, in another dispatch, "and

to frame a petition to demand that all naticas should be permitted to trade freely with the colony, and that the inhabitants should have the right to move out of this province, according to their pleasure. Freedom of trade, and freedom of action!—a pretty thing! What would become of Crozat's privileges? The colonists also insist on Crozat's monopoly of trade being confined to the wholesale disposition of his goods and merchandise. They pretend that he should in no case be allowed to retail his goods, and that his gains should be limited to fifty per cent. on the original cost. Their petition contains several other demands equally absurd. In order to cut all these intrigues in the bud, I declared that if this petition was ever presented to me, I would hang the bearer. A certain fellow, by the name of Miragoin, had taken charge of this precious piece of composition, and had assumed the responsibility of its presentation, but on his being informed of my intentions, he tore it to pieces."

One would have thought that Cadillac had *supped full of annoyances, if not of horrors*. But another cause of deep mortification, particularly for one so pious and so strictly moral as he was, had been kept in reserve; which was, his finding himself under the necessity of resisting the solicitations of his friend, the Curate de la Vente, and of the other missionaries, who insisted upon his expelling out of the colony, two women of bad character, that had lately arrived. "I have refused to do so," said he, in one of his dispatches, "because if I sent away all women of loose habits, there would be no females left, and this would not meet the views of the government. Besides (he slyly observed), one of these girls occupies the position of a servant in the household of the king's commissary, who will no doubt reclaim her from her vicious propensities.

After all, I think that the members of the clergy here are perhaps too rigid, and too fond of exacting long and repeated confessions. A little more lenity would better suit the place and time. Let me add, in conclusion, that if you do not check the intrigues of Bienville and of the commissary, who have gained over to their side most of the officers and of the inhabitants, Crozat will soon be obliged to abandon his enterprise."

We see that there was a deep feeling of animosity between Cadillac and Bienville, which threatened to be of long continuance. But Cadillac had a daughter, and Bienville was a young man, and one of such as are framed by nature to win the affections of the fair descendants of Mother Eve. Would not a novel-writer imagine, under such circumstances, a love story, either to soothe the two chiefs into a reconciliation, or to fan into more sparkling flames the slow burning fire of their inextinguishable hatred? Is it not strange that what would certainly be devised to increase the interest of the dramatic plot, did actually turn out to be an historical occurrence? But what fact or transaction, commonplace as it would appear anywhere else according to the ordinary run of things, does not, when connected with Louisiana, assume a romantic form and shape?

Thus Cadillac's daughter did really fall in love with Bienville. But although her eyes spoke plainly the sentiment of her heart, Bienville did not seem to be conscious of his good fortune, and kept himself wrapped up in respectful blindness. The lady's love, however, made itself so apparent, that it at last flashed upon Cadillac's mind. This was indeed a discovery! How he did wince at the idea that one whom he looked upon as so inferior to himself in birth and rank, and particularly that a *Canadian* should have won the



heart of his daughter! Vehemently and long did he remonstrate with his progeny on the unnatural passion which she had conceived; but the love-sick maid thought it perfectly natural, and showed a pertinacity which greatly shocked her equally obstinate parent. Nay, she did what others had done before her, and became so pale and emaciated that she frightened her father's opposition into an acquiescence with her wishes. So much so, that Cadillac brought himself, at last, to think that this match would not be so disproportionate as he had conceived it at first. Bienville, after all, was a gentleman by birth, he was the founder of a colony, and had been a governor!—That was something to begin with, and he might, in the course of time, rise to an eminence which would show him worthy of an alliance with the illustrious Cadillac family. Besides, Cadillac was getting old, and had so far had a poor chance of acquiring the wealth he had been in quest of so long. If he died, what would become of his daughter? These reflections settled the question, and Cadillac said to himself, "Bienville shall be my son-in-law." Never did he, for one single moment, dream of any obstacle. Nothing remained but to encourage Bienville's fancied timidity, and to lift up the curtain which concealed from him the bliss awaiting his unconscious innocence.

One morning, Bienville, much to his astonishment, received a friendly invitation to the governor's closet. There, the great man proffered to his subordinate the olive branch of reconciliation, and by slow degrees, gave him to understand that the god Hymen might seal the bond of their amity. Bienville received this communication with low and reverential obeisance. Much delighted did he show himself at this offer of reconciliation, and much honored with the prospect, however distant, of an alliance so far beyond his hum-



ble aspirations; but, at the same time, he plainly intimated to Cadillac his firm determination, for reasons best known to himself, forever to undergo the mortifications of celibacy! So unexpected this answer was, that Cadillac reeled in his seat, as if he had been stunned by a sudden blow. There he stood in a trance, with his mouth gaping wide, with his eyes starting from their sockets, and with dilating nostrils, while Bienville and the very walls, and every thing that was in the room, seemed to spin and whirl madly around him with electric rapidity. Now, indeed, he had known the worst, fate had entered the lists, and *Birnam wood had come to Dunsinane!* What! his daughter, a Cadillac, to be refused by a Canadian adventurer! No doubt a screw had broken loose in the machinery of the universe, and our whole world was to be flung back into the womb of old chaos again! Before Cadillac had recovered from this paroxysm, Bienville had made his exit, and had gone to tell the anecdote to some confidential friends. The fact which I have related is thus briefly mentioned by Bienville in one of his dispatches: "I can assure your excellency that the cause of Cadillac's enmity to me is my having refused to marry his daughter."

Bienville did not wait long to receive a signal proof of Cadillac's vindictive spirit, and he anticipated a manifestation of it, when summoned a second time to appear before his chief. Nor was he deceived; and when he was ushered into Cadillac's presence, that dignitary's countenance, which looked more than usually solemn and stern, indicated that he had matured his revenge for the insult he had undergone. "Sir," said he to Bienville, "I have received secret information that four Canadians, on their way to Illinois, have been massacred by the Natchez. You must punish the murderers,

and build a fort on the territory of that perfidious nation, to keep it in check. Take Richebourg's company of thirty-four men, fifteen sailors to man your boats, and proceed to execute my commands." "What!" exclaimed Bienville, "do you really intend to send me with thirty-four men to encounter a hostile tribe that numbers eight hundred warriors!" "A truce to your observations," continued Cadillac, with a bitter smile, "to hear must be to obey. I can not dispose of a greater force. I have myself good grounds to expect being attacked by the neighboring nations, who, as I am informed, have entered into a conspiracy against us. Yet the offense committed by the Natchez must be instantly requited, or they would be emboldened into the perpetration of worse outrages. Go then, with such means as I can give; in case of success, your merit will be greater, but if you should meet with any reverse, you will be at no loss for an excuse, and all the responsibility shall be mine. Besides, you and Richebourg have such talents and courage as will easily extricate you out of any difficulty. You are a very Hercules, and he is a perfect Theseus, in licentious propensities, at least. What is this mission I send you upon, compared with the twelve labors of the mythological hero, who, like you on this occasion, was sent forth to redress wrongs and punish crimes!" To the studied sarcasm of this set speech, Bienville made no answer. In those days of adventurous and almost mad exploits in America, in an age when the disciplinarian rules of hierarchy commanded such respect and obedience, none, without disgrace, could have questioned the word of his superior, when that word was to brave danger, however foolish and reckless this exercise of authority might be. Moreover, Bienville saw that his ruin had been deliberately planned, and that remonstrance was useless. Therefore,

signifying mute assent to Cadillac's wishes, he withdrew to betake himself to the execution of the orders which he had received, and to advise with Richebourg on the best means of defeating Cadillac's malicious designs.

Richebourg was a brave officer, full of intelligence and of cool daring, whose career in Europe, as a military man, had been interrupted by several duels, which at last had forced him to leave his country. He was so amiable, so obliging, so exceedingly conciliatory, that it was difficult for one who did not know a certain eccentric peculiarity of his mind, to understand how he had come to have so many quarrels. Who more gifted than he with suavity of manners and the art of pleasing? He never was fretted by contradiction, and ever smiled at opposition. Popular among men, a favorite with women, he never allowed words of blame to fall from his lips, but on the contrary was remarkable for the good nature of his remarks on all occasions except one. How could this milk of human kindness, which was the dominant element of his disposition, be suddenly soured into offensive acidity, or turned into gall? It was passing strange! But it was nevertheless true, that, for some cause which he never explained, he had conceived the most inveterate hatred for all that smacked of philanthropy. There suddenly sprung up in his heart a sort of diseased aversion for the man, who, in his presence, either went by the name of philanthropist, or expressed sentiments which gave him a claim to that character. Richebourg, on such occasions, would listen with exemplary composure, and, treasuring up in his memory every philanthropic declaration that fell from the lips of the speaker, he would, as soon as he found the opportunity, put him to the test, as to whether his practice corresponded with his theory. Alas! few stood the test, and then Richebourg was not

sparing of the words, *humbug*, *impostor*, and *hypocrite*. What was the consequence? A quarrel; and invariably the philanthropist was run through. On this inexplicable whim, on this Quixotic tilting with all pretenders to philanthropy, Richebourg's friends frequently remonstrated, but found him intractable. No answer would he give to their observations, but he kept steadily on the same course of action. At last it became evident to them, that it was an incurable mania, a crotchet which had got into his brain and was incapable of eradication. With this imperfection they put up with good humor, on account of his many noble qualities, and he became generally known and designated as the philanthropist hater. His companions in arms, who loved him—although with some of them he had actually fought, because, either in earnest or in jest, they had hoisted the red flag that was sure to rouse the bull—had, in a joking manner, convened one day all the officers and inhabitants of Mobile and Massacre Island, and had passed, with mock gravity, a resolution, which was, however, seriously adhered to, and in which they declared that, for the future, no one would allow himself, either directly or indirectly, to be a philanthropist within a radius of three miles of Richebourg. This secured peace; but woe to the imprudent or uninformed stranger who trespassed on that sacred ground, with the slightest visible sign of the heresy which the fanatic Richebourg held in utter abomination!

Such was the officer who was to share with Bienville the dangers of the expedition, which was subsequently known in the annals of Louisiana, as the *first Natchez war*.

On the 24th of April, 1716, Bienville, with the small force which had been allotted to him, encamped on an island, situated in the Mississippi, opposite the village

of the Tunicas, at the distance of about eighteen leagues from the Natchez. He immediately sent a Tunica to convey to the Natchez the intelligence that he was coming to establish a factory among them, to trade in furs, and to supply them, in exchange, with all the European merchandise they might want. Bienville had been informed that the Natchez believed that the late murders they had committed on the persons of some French traders had not been discovered, and he resolved to avail himself of this circumstance to accomplish his purposes without the risk of a collision. He affected, therefore, to have come on the most friendly errand, and gave out that he had encamped on the island merely to afford rest to his men, and to minister to the wants of some that were sick. He nevertheless took the precaution to have an intrenchment made with stakes or posts, within which he erected three log-houses. One he intended as a store-house for his provisions and ammunition, the other as a guard-house, and the third for a prison.

On the 27th, three Natchez came, under the ostensible purpose of complimenting Bienville on the part of their tribe, but in reality to act as spies, and they tendered to him the calumet, that mystic pipe which the Indians use for fumigation, as the ensign of peace. Bienville refused to smoke with them, and pretended to consider himself as not treated with the respect to which he was entitled, because their chiefs had not come in person, to greet *him*, the chief of the French. "I see," said he, "that your people are not pleased with the idea of my forming a settlement on their territory, for trading with them. Otherwise they would have expressed their satisfaction in a more becoming manner. Be it so. If the Natchez are so thankless for what I meant to be a favor, I will alter my determina-

tion, and give the preference to the Tunicas, who have always shown themselves such great friends to the French."

After this speech, Bienville ordered the three envoys to be well feasted and treated with kindness. The next day, they returned to their villages, with a Frenchman sent by Bienville, and whose mission was to address a formal invitation to the Natchez chiefs to a conference on the Tunicas Island. On this occasion, the Natchez felt greatly embarrassed, and many consultations were had on the best course to be pursued. Some were of opinion, that it would be imprudent for their chiefs to put themselves in the power of the French, who might have received information of what had lately occurred, and who might have come, under the garb of peace, to entrap their great men and wreak vengeance upon them. Others maintained that, from the circumstance of the French having come in such small number, it was evident that they were ignorant of the death of their countrymen, and did not intend to act as foes. "This inference," they said, "was confirmed by the information which had been carefully collected by their spies. They had no pretext to treat the French with indignity, and therefore it was proper for the chiefs of their tribe to go to meet and escort to their villages the wise and valiant pale-faced chief, who had already visited them on preceding occasions. A different course might excite suspicion, and investigation might lead to the discovery of what it was desirable to conceal. At any rate, the chiefs, by refusing to accept Bienville's invitation, would certainly incur his displeasure, and he might, by forming a trading establishment at the Tunicas, enrich that rival nation, to the detriment of the Natchez." These arguments prevailed, and in an evil

hour for the Indian chiefs, their visit to Bienville's camp was resolved on.

On the very day Bienville had dismissed the three Indian envoys, he had dispatched one of his most skillful Canadian boatmen, to ascend the river with the utmost secrecy, during the night, and proceeding to a certain distance beyond and above the villages of the Natchez, to give notice to the French who might be coming down the river of the danger that threatened them from the Natchez. That man was provided with a score of parchment rolls, which he was to append to trees in places where they were likely to meet the eyes of those descending the Mississippi, and which bore this inscription: "The Natchez have declared war against the French, and M. de Bienville is encamped at the Tunicas."

On the 8th of May, at 10 o'clock in the morning, the Indian chiefs were seen coming with great state in four pirogues. The chiefs were seated under parasols, and were accompanied by twelve men, swimming. At this sight, Bienville ordered half of his men to keep themselves well armed and concealed in the guard-house, but ready for sudden action. The other half he instructed to appear without any weapons, to assist the Indians in landing, and to take charge of all their war apparel, as it were to relieve them from an encumbrance, and under the pretext that it would be improper to go in such a guise to the awaiting feast and carousal. He further commanded that eight of the principal chiefs, whom he named, should be introduced into his tent, and the rest be kept outside until his pleasure was made known. All this was carried into execution without the slightest difficulty. The chiefs entered the tent, singing and dancing, and presented the calumet to Bienville. But he waved it off with con-



tempt, and sternly told them that, before drawing one whiff from the smoking pipe, he desired to know what they had to say, and that he was willing to listen to their harangue. At this unexpected treatment, the chiefs were highly disconcerted: they went out of the tent in dismay, and seemed, with great ceremony, to be offering their calumet to the sun. Their great priest, with extended arms, made a solemn appeal to their god, supplicating him to pour his rays into the heart of the pale-faced chief, to dispel the clouds which had there accumulated, and had prevented Bienville from seeing his way and doing justice to the feelings of his red friends. After all this religious display, they returned to the tent, and again tendered their calumet to Bienville, who, tired of all these proceedings, thought proper at once to take the bull by the horns and to come out with his charges. "Before I receive your token of amity," said he abruptly, "and pledge my faith in return, tell me what satisfaction you offer for the death of the Frenchmen you have murdered." The Indians, who had really thought that Bienville knew nothing of that crime, appeared to be struck aghast by this direct and sudden apostrophe: they hung down their heads and answered not. "Let them be carried to the prison prepared for them," exclaimed Bienville impatiently, "and let them be secured with chains, stocks, and fetters."

On this demonstration of hostility, out came the Indians with their death-songs, which, much to the annoyance of the French, they kept repeating the whole day:—they refused all food, and appeared determined to meet their expected doom with the dauntless energy so common in that race of men. Toward evening, Bienville sent for the great chief, called "The Great Sun," and for two of his brothers, whose names were,



"The Stung Serpent" and "The Little Sun." They were the three most influential rulers of the nation. Bienville thus addressed them: "I know that it was not by your order, or with your consent, that the French whose death I come to avenge have been murdered. Therefore, your lives are safe, but I want the heads of the murderers, and of the chiefs who ordered or sanctioned the deed. I will not be satisfied with their scalps:—I wish for the very heads, in order that I may be sure that deceit has not been practiced. This whole night I give you for consultation on the best mode of affording me satisfaction. If you refuse, woe to your tribe! You know the influence which I have over all the Indian nations of this country. They respect, love and trust me, because from the day, seventeen summers ago, when I appeared among them, to the present hour, I have always been just and upright. You know that if I raise my little finger against you, and give one single war-whoop, the father of rivers will hear, and will carry it, up and down stream, to all his tributaries. The woods themselves will prick up their leafy ears, from the big salt lake, south, to the fresh water lakes at the north, and raising their mighty voice as when struggling with the hurricane, they will summon from the four quarters of the horizon the children of the forests, who will crush you with their united and overwhelming powers.

"You know that I do not boast, and that those red allies will gladly march against you, and destroy the eight beautiful villages of which you are so proud, without my risking the life of one single Frenchman. Do you not remember that, in 1704, the Tchioumaqui killed a missionary and three other Frenchmen? They refused to deliver the murderers to me—my wrath was kindled, and I said to the neighboring Indian nations:

• Bienville hates the Tchioumaquis, and he who kills a Tchioumaqui is Bienville's friend.' When I passed this sentence upon them, you know that their tribe was composed of three hundred families. A few months elapsed, and they were reduced to eighty! they sued for peace at last, yielded to my demands, and it was only then that the tomahawk, the arrow and the rifle ceased to drink their blood. Justice was satisfied:—and has Bienville's justice a smaller foot and a slower gait when it stalks abroad in the pursuit of the white man who has wronged the red man? No! In 1702, two Pascagoulas were killed by a Frenchman. *Blood for blood*, I said, and the guilty one, although he was one of my people, no longer lived. Thus, what I have exacted from the Indians, I have rendered unto them. Thus have I behaved, and thus have I deserved the reputation which I enjoy in the wigwams of the red men, because I never deviated from the straight path of honesty. Hence I am called by them the *arrow of uprightness* and the *tomahawk of justice*.

“*Measure for measure!*—this is my rule. When the Indians have invoked my arbitration between themselves, they have been invariably subject to this same rule. Thus, in 1703, two Taouachas having killed a Chickasaw, I obliged their chiefs to put them to death. *Blood will have blood*. When the Choctaws murdered two Chactioumans in 1715, I said, *tooth for tooth, lives for lives*, and the satisfaction was granted. In 1707, the Mobilians, by my order, carried to the Taouachas, the head of one of their tribe in expiation of an offense of a similar nature; and, in 1709, the Pascagoulas having assassinated a Mobilian, ‘*an eye for an eye*,’ was my award, and he who was found guilty forfeited his life. The Indians have always recognized the equity of this law, and have complied with it, not only between them-

selves, but between them and the French. In 1703, the Coiras made no difficulty to put to death four of their warriors, who had murdered a missionary and two other Frenchmen. I could quote many other instances, —but the cause of truth does not require long speeches, and few words will convince an honest heart. I have done. I do not believe that you will refuse to abide by the law and custom which has always existed among the Indians, and between them and the French. There would be iniquity and danger in the breach of that law: honor, justice, peace and safety lie in its observance. Your white brother waits for an answer.”

The Indians listened to this speech with profound attention, but made no reply, and Bienville ordered them to be remanded to prison. The next morning, at daybreak, they requested to speak to Bienville, and they were conducted to his presence. The Indian who was the first of the chiefs by rank, addressed him in these terms: “The voice of the Great Spirit made itself heard within us last night. We have listened to his dictate, and we come to give our white brother whatever satisfaction he desires. But we wish him to observe that we, the great chiefs, being all prisoners, there is no man left behind who has the power to accomplish the mission of bringing the heads thou demandest. Let, therefore, the Stung Serpent be liberated, and thy will shall be done.” To this request Bienville refused his assent, because he knew the energy of that chief, and doubted his intentions; but he consented that Little Sun should go in his brother’s place.

Five days had elapsed, when Little Sun returned, and brought three heads. After a careful examination of their features, Bienville sent again for all the chiefs, and ordering one of the heads to be flung at their feet; “The eye of the white chief,” said he, “sees clear through

the fog of your duplicity, and his heart is full of sorrow at your conduct. This is not the head of the guilty, but of the innocent who has died for the guilty. This is not the head of Oyelape, him whom ye call the Chief of the *White Clay*." "True," answered the Indians, "we do not deny thy word, but Oyelape has fled, and his brother was killed in his place." "Even if it be so," observed Bienville, "this substitution can not be accepted."

The next day, the 15th of May, Bienville allowed two other chiefs and the great priest to depart for their villages, and try if they would not be more successful than the Little Sun. They returned on the 25th, and informed Bienville that they could not discover the place of Oyelape's concealment, but they brought along with them some slaves and part of the goods which had belonged to the murdered Frenchmen. In the mean time, twenty-two Frenchmen and Canadians who were coming down the river in separate detachments, having seen the parchment signs posted up along its banks by the order of Bienville, had given a wide berth to the side occupied by the Natchez, and, using proper precaution, had arrived safely at Bienville's camp. Thus he found himself at the head of seventy-one men, well armed, of tried hardihood, and used to Indian warfare. This was a fortunate accession to his forces; for the Indians had almost determined to make, in their canoes, a night attack upon the island, and to rescue their chiefs or perish. The Tunicas had given to Bienville notice of what was brewing among the Natchez, and offered forty of their best warriors to assist the French in the defense of the island. But Bienville, who, although he affected to put great trust in them, feared that they might prove traitors, refused with apparent thankfulness their proffered assistance, and replied that, with his small force, he

could make the island good against the whole tribe of the Natchez. This manifestation of confidence in his strength, and the timely arrival of the twenty-two white men, with some Illinois, no doubt prevented the Natchez from carrying their project into execution. It is probable that they were also deterred by the consideration, that the French, if hard pressed, would put their prisoners to death.

The Great Sun, the Stung Serpent, and the Little Sun, who, perhaps, had so far delayed to make any confession, because they entertained the expectation of being rescued, having at last given up this hope, came out with a frank avowal. They maintained that they never had any previous knowledge of the intended murder of the French, and declared that four of the assassins were among Bienville's prisoners. One of them was called the Chief of the *Beard*; the other was named Alahoflechia, the Chief of the *Walnut Village*; the two others were ordinary warriors. They affirmed that these were the only guilty ones, with the exception of Oyelape, the Chief of the *White Clay*, who had fled. "The Great Spirit," they said, "has blinded them, has turned their wits inside out, and they have, of their own accord, delivered themselves into thy hands. It is fortunate that it be so; otherwise the two warriors might have fled, and the two chiefs are such favorites with the nation, that they would have successfully resisted our demand for their heads, and to give thee satisfaction would have been impossible. As it is, it shows that our Great Spirit has shaken hands with the God of the Cross, and has passed on the side of our white brother."

It was then the 1st of June, and the river, which was rising daily, had overflowed the island one foot deep, and made the quarters of the French more than uncomfortable. Humidity, combined with heat, had engen-

dered disease, and half of Bienville's men were stretched on the couch of sickness. It was then high time for him to put an end to the situation he was in. Summoning to his presence all his prisoners, with the exception of the four men who had been designated as the assassins, he said to them: "Your people, after having invited my people to trade with them, suddenly violated the laws of hospitality, and treacherously murdered four Frenchmen who were their guests. They thought the atrocious deed would remain unknown, and that they would quietly enjoy their blood-stained plunder. But the souls of the dead spoke to me, and I came, and I invited you to my camp, as you had invited the French to your villages, and you became my guests, as they had been yours, and I rose upon you, as you rose upon them. Measure for measure. But I shall not butcher you, as you butchered them. You killed the innocent and the confiding—I shall kill only the treacherous and the guilty. Who can say that this is not justice? Now, let us bury the hatchet of war. I am satisfied with and believe your last declarations. Hear, then, on what conditions I consent to release you and grant you peace. You will swear to put to death, as soon as possible, Oyelape, the Chief of the White Clay, and you will bring his head to the French officer whom I shall station among you. You will consent, also, to my putting to death the two chiefs and the two warriors who are in my hands. You will restore every object that you may ever have taken from the French; for what has been lost or wasted, you will force your people to pay the equivalent in furs and provisions. You will oblige them to cut two thousand five hundred stakes of acacia-wood, thirteen feet long by a diameter of ten inches, and to convey the whole to the bank of the Mississippi, at such a spot as it will please the French

to erect a fort; and furthermore, you will bind yourselves to furnish us, as a covering for our buildings, with the barks of three thousand trees. This is to be executed before the first day of July; and above all, you will also swear, never, under any pretext or color whatever, to entertain the slightest commercial or friendly relations with the British, whom you know to be the eternal enemies of the French."

The chiefs assented to these terms, swore by the sun that they would, for the future, be the best friends of the French, and urged Bienville to smoke the pipe of peace. Bienville knew well what to think of these hollow protestations, but affected to believe in the return of the Natchez to the sentiments they professed. He refused, however, to smoke, because he considered that the treaty of peace would not be valid, until ratified in a meeting of the whole nation, but he dismissed all the Indians with the exception of the Stung Serpent, the Little Sun, and the four criminals who were doomed to death. With the departing Indians he sent Aid-major Pailloux, accompanied by three soldiers, to be present at the ratification of the treaty. On the 7th of June, nine old men came with great ceremony and pomp, to give to Bienville official information of the expected ratification.

On the 12th, the two Indian chiefs were put to death, the two warriors having already met their fate on the 9th. When the Chief of the Beard saw that the moment had come for the execution of the sentence passed upon him, he ceased his death-song which he had been chanting for some time, and took up a sort of war-song, while he looked fiercely at the threatening muskets of the French, and at the few Indians of his tribe whom Bienville had detained to witness the death of the culprit.

**War Song.**

## I.

"Let there be joy in the hearts of the Natchez! A child is born to them of the race of their Suns. A boy is born with beard on his chin! The prodigy still works on from generation to generation." So sang the warriors of my tribe when I sprung from my mother's womb, and the shrill cry of the eagle in the heavens was heard in joyous response. Hardly fifteen summers had passed over my head, when long and glossy my beard had grown. I looked round, and I saw that I was the only red man that had this awful mark on his face, and I interrogated my mother, and she said :

Son of the Chiefs of the Beard,  
Thou shalt know this mystery,  
In which thy curious eye wishes to pry,  
When thy beard from black becomes red.

## II.

Let there be joy in the hearts of the Natchez! A hunter is born to them, a hunter of the race of their Suns. Ask of the bears, of the buffaloes, of the tigers, and of the swift-footed deer, whose arrows they fear most. They tremble and cower when the footstep of the hunter with beard on his chin is heard on the heath. But I was born too with brains in my head, as well as beard on my chin, and I pondered on my mother's words. One day, when a leopard, whom I strangled, had torn my breast, I painted my beard with my own blood, and I stood smiling before her. She said nothing, but her eye gleamed with wild delight, and she took me to the temple, where, standing by the sacred fire, she thus sang to me :

Son of the Chiefs of the Beard,  
Thou shalt know the mystery,  
Since, true to thy nature, with thy own blood,  
Thy black beard thou hast turned to red.

## III.

Let there be joy in the hearts of the Natchez! for a witted chief, worthy of the race of their Suns, has been born to them, in thee, my son; a



noble chief with beard on his chin ! Listen to the explanation of this prodigy. In days of old, a Natchez maid of the race of their Suns, was on a visit to the Mobilians. There, she soon loved the youthful chief of that nation, and her wedding-day was nigh, when there came from the big salt lake, south, a host of bearded men, who sacked the town, slew the red chief with their thunder, and one of those accursed evil spirits used violence to the maid, when her lover's corpse was hardly cold in death. She found, in sorrow, her way back to the Natchez hills, where she became a mother ; and lo ! the boy had beard on his chin ! and when he grew to understand his mother's words, she whispered in his ear :

Son of the Chiefs of the Beard,  
Born from a bloody day,  
Bloody be thy hand, bloody be thy life,  
Until thy black beard with blood becomes red.

## IV.

Let there be joy in the hearts of the Natchez ! In my first ancestor, a long line of the best of hunters, of chiefs, and of warriors of the race of their Suns, had been born to them, with beard on their chin ! What chase was ever unsuccessful, when over it they presided ? When they spoke in the council of the wise men of the nation, did it not always turn out that their advice, whether adopted or rejected, was the best in the end ? In what battle were they ever defeated ? When were they known to be worn out with fatigue, hardships, hunger or thirst, heat or cold, either on land or on water ? Who ever could stem, as they, the rushing current of the father of rivers ? Who can count the number of scalps which they brought from distant expeditions ? Their names have always been famous in the wigwams of all the red nations. They have struck terror into the boldest breasts of the enemies of the Natchez ; and mothers, when their sons paint their bodies in the colors of war, say to them :

Fight where and with whom you please,  
But beware, oh ! beware of the Chiefs of the Beard !  
Give way to them, as you would to death,  
Or their black beards with your blood will be red !

## V.

Let there be joy in the hearts of the Natchez ! When the first Chief of the Beard first trimmed the sacred fire in the temple, a voice was

heard, which said, "As long as there lives a chief, of the race of the Suns, with beard on his chin, no evil can happen to the Natchez nation; but if the white race should ever resume the blood which it gave in a bloody day, woe, three times woe to the Natchez! of them nothing will remain but the shadow of a name!" Thus spoke the invisible prophet. Years rolled on, years thick on years, and none of the accursed white faces were seen! But they appeared at last, wrapped up in their pale skins like shrouds of the dead; and the father of my father, whom tradition had taught to guard against the predicted danger, slew two of the hated strangers, and my father, in his turn, killed four!

Praise be to the Chiefs of the Beard!  
Who knew how to avenge their old ancestral injury!  
When with the sweet blood of a white foe,  
Their black beard they proudly painted red.

## VI.

Let there be joy in the hearts of the Natchez! When I saw the glorious light of day, there was born to them a great warrior, of the race of their Suns, a warrior and a chief with beard on his chin! The pledge of protection, of safety, and of glory stood embodied in me. When I shouted my first war-whoop, the owl hooted and smelt the ghosts of my enemies!—the wolves howled, and the carrion vultures shrieked with joy, for they knew their food was coming!—and I fed them with Chickasaw flesh, with Choctaw flesh, until they were gorged with the flesh of the red men! A kind master and purveyor I was to them, the poor dumb creatures that I loved! But lately, I have given them more dainty food. I boast of having done better than my father: five Frenchmen have I killed, and my only regret at dying is, that it will prevent me from killing more!

Ha! ha! ha! that was game worthy of the Chief of the Beard!  
How lightly he danced! ho! ho! ho!  
How gladly he shouted! ha! ha! ha!  
Each time with French blood his black beard became red!

## VII.

Let sorrow be in the hearts of the Natchez! The great hunter is no more! The wise chief is going to meet his forefathers: the indomitable warrior will no longer raise his hatchet in the defence of the children of the sun. O burning shame!—he was betrayed by his brother chiefs, who

sold his blood. If they had followed his advice they would have united with the Choctaws, with the Chickasaws, and all the other red nations, and they would have slain all the French dogs that came prowling and stealing over the beautiful face of our country. But there was too much of the woman in their cowardly hearts. Well and good! Let the will of fate be accomplished! The white race will soon resume the blood which they gave, and then the glory and the very existence of the Natchez nation will have departed forever with the Chief of the Beard; for I am the last of my race, and my blood flows in no other human veins. O Natchez! Natchez! remember the prophet's voice! I am content to die, for I leave behind me none but the doomed, and I go to revel with my brave ancestors!

They will recognize their son in the Chief of the Beard;  
They will welcome him to their glorious homestead,  
When they see so many scalps at his girdle,  
And his black beard with French blood painted red!

He ceased, and stood up before the admiring eyes of the French with a look of exulting defiance, and with his fine athletic form measuring seven feet high, and seemingly dilated into more gigantic proportions by the excitement which convulsed his soul. The French officer who commanded the platoon of soldiers chosen on this occasion to fulfill a melancholy duty, gave the word, "*fire!*" and the Chief of the Beard passed into another world.

On the 3d of August, the fortifications ordered by Bienville had been completed, the Indians having strictly complied with the terms of the treaty. They did more: they not only furnished all the materials which had been stipulated, but labored with great zeal in cutting ditches, in raising the parapets and bastions of the fort, and in constructing the buildings required by the French. Stung Serpent even sent one hundred and fifty men to the French, to transport all their baggage, ammunition, and provisions, from the Tunicas to the Natchez. On the 25th of August, Bien-

ville found himself comfortably and securely established in the strong position which he had in such a wily manner obtained, as we know, from the Natchez. However, they appeared to have dropped all resentment at the mode by which Bienville had got such advantages over them, and they behaved as if they were extremely desirous to impress upon him the belief that they were delighted at his forming a settlement among them. Five or six hundred men of that tribe, accompanied by three hundred women, came one day to dance under the walls of the fort, in manifestation of their joy at the termination of their quarrel with the French, and at the determination of the pale faces to establish themselves among their red friends. Bienville invited the chiefs to come into the fort, and treated them with due honors. It is evident that the Indians wished to propitiate the strangers whom they could not shake off, and whom, from instinct alone, they must have regarded as their most dangerous enemies, and as the future cause of their ultimate ruin. But that they felt any satisfaction at the intrusion of these new-comers, the knowledge of human nature forbids us to believe. Two distinct and antagonistical races had met front to front, and at the very moment they appeared to embrace in amity, and joined in the carousing feast, the one was secretly meditating subjugation, and the other resistance and revenge.

On the 28th of August, seeing no signs of hostility from the Indians, Bienville left Aid-major Pailloux in command of the new fort, which was called "Rosalie," and departed for Mobile, where he arrived on the 4th of October, with the satisfaction of having accomplished the difficult task with which he had been charged. This was one cause of triumph over his adversary, Cadillac, but he there found another cause of gratula-

tion in a letter to him from the minister of the marine department, in which he was instructed to resume the government of the colony, in the absence of De l'Epinaï, appointed to succeed Cadillac. This was fortunate for Bienville, for he found his quondam superior in a towering rage at his success, and at what he called Bienville's execrable perfidy in taking forcible possession of the Indian chiefs, as he did. But Bienville contented himself with laughing at his impotent vituperation.

Before closing with Cadillac's administration, I shall briefly relate some other curious incidents, with which it was signalized. In 1715, a man by the name of Dutigné, who loved a joke, wishing to amuse himself with Cadillac's inordinate passion for the discovery of mines, exhibited to him some pieces of ore, which contained certain proportions of silver, and persuaded him that they had been found in the neighborhood of the Kaskaskias. This was enough to fire Cadillac's overheated imagination. Anticipating the realization of all his dreams, he immediately set off for the Illinois, where, much to his mortification, he learned that he had been imposed upon by Dutigné, to whom the deceptive pieces of ore had been given by a Mexican, who had brought them from his country. After an absence of eight months, spent in fruitless researches, he returned to Mobile, where he found himself the laughing-stock of the community. This was not calculated to soothe his mind, and in one of his dispatches, in which he gave an account of the colony, he said :

“There are as many governors here as there are officers. Every one of them would like to perform his duties according to his own interpretation. As to the superior council of this province, allow me to represent to your grace, that its assuming the authority to mod-

ify his Majesty's orders is fraught with injury to the royal interest, and precludes the possibility of establishing here a good government, because the language of its members smacks more of the independence of republicans than of the subordination of loyal subjects. '*I will or will not,*'—'*it shall or shall not be,*' are words of daily utterance in their mouths. A governor must be clothed with power superior to any other, in order that he may act with effect, and cause to be executed with prompt exactitude the commands of his Majesty, instead of his being checked by any controlling or opposing influence; which is always the case, when he is forced to consult subaltern officers, who are swayed entirely by their own interest, and care very little for the service of the king, or for the prosperity of the colony." These were stones flung at Bienville, at the commissary Duclos, and at the superior council, who threw obstacles in his way, and interfered with the exercise of the absolute power which he thought that he possessed, because, as governor, he considered himself to be an emanation from, and a representation of the king!

On his way up the river, to search for gold and silver, Cadillac stopped at Natchez. As soon as he was known to approach, the Indian chiefs came out in barbaric state to meet him, and according to their usages, presented to him their calumet, in token of peace and amity. Highly incensed Cadillac was at the presumption of the savages, in supposing that he would contaminate his patrician lips with the contact of their vile pipe. He accordingly treated the poor Indians very little better than he would uncouth animals, thrusting themselves into his presence. His having departed without having consented to smoke with them, had impressed the Natchez, who could not understand the nature of his pride, with the idea that he meditated

war upon their tribe. Then, they resolved to anticipate the expected blow, and they secretly massacred some Frenchmen who happened to be in their villages. Hence the origin of the first quarrel of the Natchez with the French, to which Bienville put an end with such signal success, but with a little sprinkling of treachery.

It was not the Natchez alone whom Cadillac had offended. He had alienated from the French the affections of the Choctaws, who had always been their friends, but who, latterly, had invited the English to settle among them. Cadillac ordered them to expel their new guests, but the Choctaws answered that they did not care for him, nor for the forty or fifty French rogues whom he had under his command. This was the kick of the ass, and Cadillac resolved not to bear it, but to show them that the lion was not yet dead. After deep cogitations, he conceived, for their punishment, a politic stroke, which he carried into execution, and of which he informed his government with Spartan brevity: "I have persuaded," said he, "the brother of the great chief of the Choctaws to kill his sovereign and brother, pledging myself to recognize him as his successor. He did so, and came here with an escort of one hundred men. I gave him presents, and secured from him an advantageous peace."

Thus it is seen that Cadillac, with a very bad grace, pretended that his tender sensibilities were shocked at the treatment of the Natchez chiefs by Bienville. In his case it was the eye with the beam finding fault with the mote in his neighbor's eye.

On the 22d of June, 1716, the exasperation of Cadillac, who found himself in a hornet's nest, had become such, that he vented his feelings in these terms, in one of his dispatches: "Decidedly, this colony is a monster

without head or tail, and its government is a shapeless absurdity. The cause of it is, that the fictions or fabulists have been believed in preference to the veracity of my declarations. Ah! why is there in falsehood a charm which makes it more acceptable than truth? Has it not been asserted that there are mines in Arkansas and elsewhere? It is a deliberate error. Has not a certain set of novel-writers published that this country is a paradise, when its beauty or utility is a mere phantasm of the brain? I protest that, having visited and examined the whole of it with care, I never saw any thing so worthless. This I must say, because my conscience forbids me to deceive his Majesty. I have always regarded truth as a queen, whose laws I was bound to obey, like a devoted knight and a faithful subject. This is, no doubt, the cause of my having stuck fast in the middle of my career, and not progressed in the path of promotion, while others, who had more political skill, understood how to frame, at my expense, pleasing misrepresentations. I know how to govern as well as any body, but poverty and impotence are two ugly scars on the face of a governor. What can I do with a force of forty soldiers, out of whom five or six are disabled? A pretty army that is, and well calculated to make me respected by the inhabitants or by the Indians! As a climax to my vexation, they are badly fed, badly paid, badly clothed, and without discipline. As to the officers, they are not much better. Verily, I do not believe that there is in the whole universe such another government."

It is not surprising that, under such circumstances, and with the ideas which fermented in his head, Cadillac should have thought that a terrible crisis was at hand. Laboring under this impression, he took refuge in Dauphine Island, where he issued a proclamation, in



which he stated that, considering the spirit of revolt and sedition which reigned in the colony, and the many quarrels and duels which occurred daily, and were produced by hasty or imprudent words, by drunkenness, or by the presence of loose women, he prohibited all plebeians from wearing a sword, or carrying other weapons, either by day or by night, under the penalty of one month's imprisonment and a fine of 300 livres, to be applied to the construction of a church. As to persons of noble birth, they were to prove their right to wear a sword, by depositing their titles in the archives of the superior council, to be there examined and registered. Cadillac's enemies, and he had many, availed themselves of this proclamation to turn him into ridicule. They fabricated every sort of mock papers of nobility, to submit them to the superior council, the members of which, from ignorance or from a desire to annoy Cadillac, referred the whole of them to him, who, as governor, was their president. Sadly puzzled was Cadillac on these occasions, and his judgments afforded infinite amusement to the colonists. His waggish tormentors went farther, and, pretending to have formed an order of chivalry, they elected him, in a solemn meeting, grand master of that order, under the title of the *Knight of the golden calf*. They declared, with feigned gravity, that this was done in commemoration of the wonderful achievements and labors of their illustrious governor in his researches for precious metals. This piece of pleasantry stung him to the quick; but he winced particularly at a song which, in alternate couplets, compared the merits of the *Knight of the golden calf* with those of the celebrated *Knight of the doleful countenance*, and gave the preference to the first.

Cadillac was preparing to repress these rebellious and heinous disorders, when he received a letter from Crozat,

in which the great merchant told him bluntly, that all the evils of which he complained originated from his own bad administration. At the foot of the letter, the minister of the marine department had written these words: "The governor, Lamothe Cadillac, and the commissary, Duclos, whose dispositions and humors are incompatible, and whose intellects are not equal to the functions with which his Majesty has intrusted them, are dismissed from office." I leave it to a more graphic pen to describe Cadillac's look and Cadillac's feelings when this thunderbolt fell on his head. Suffice it to say, that he contemptuously shook off his feet the colonial dust which had there gathered, and bundling up his household gods, removed himself and them out of Louisiana, which he pronounced to be hell-doomed.

At that time, there were only a few negroes in the colony, and they were all to be found about Mobile or in Dauphine Island. These were the only persons in whom some sympathy was discovered for the departing governor. This sympathy arose from a ludicrous cause. Cadillac had carried to America the fondest remembrance of his home in Europe, and he loved to dilate on the merits of France, of his native province of Gascony, of the beautiful river Garonne, and particularly of his old feudal tower, in which he pretended that one of his ancestors had been blessed with the inestimable honor of receiving the famous Black Prince, the boast of England. There was hardly one day in the week that he did not harp upon this favorite theme, which he always resumed with new exultation. There was not a human creature in the colony, with the exception of the Indians, who was not familiar with this oft-repeated anecdote, which had gained for Cadillac the nickname of the *Black Prince*. It became a sort of designation by which he was as well known as by his own family

name; and the poor Africans, who frequently heard it, had supposed that Cadillac drew his origin from a prince of their blood and color. This was to them a source of no little pride, and to the colonists a cause of endless merriment.

There was another person who highly appreciated Cadillac, and who keenly regretted his dismissal from office: that person was the Curate de la Vente. No Davion was he, nor did he resemble a Montigny. With a pale face and an emaciated body; with a narrow forehead, which went up tapering like a pear; with thin compressed lips, never relaxed by a smile; with small gray eyes, occupying very diminutive sockets, which seemed to have been bored with a gimlet; and with heavy and shaggy eyebrows, from beneath which issued, habitually, cold and even stern looks; he would have struck the most unobserving, as being the very personification of fanaticism. When he studied, to qualify himself for his profession, he had, several times, read the Bible and the Gospels through; but his little mind had then stuck to the letter, and had never been able to comprehend the spirit, of the holy books. Like a fly, it had moved all round the flask which contained the sweet liquor, without being able to extract the slightest particle of it. When ordained a priest, the Bible and the Gospels were consigned to oblivion. For him, kneeling was prayer, and prayer was religion. Christianity, which is the triumph of reason, because it exacts no belief but that which flows from rational conviction, was, according to his conception, nothing but a mysterious and inexplicable hodge-podge of crude and despotic dictates, to be accepted on trust and submitted to without reflection, discussion, or analysis of any kind: for him, thought in such matters would have been a grievous sin; his breviary was the only book which he

had read for many years, and he laid to his soul the flattering unction that he was a pious man, because he minutely complied with the ritual of his church. He fasted, did penance, and never failed reciting, in due time, all the litanies. Thus, observing strictly all the forms and discipline of the Roman Catholic faith, he thought himself a very good Christian. But every man who did not frequently confess to a priest, and did not receive the sacraments as often as the catechism of his creed required, was, in his opinion, no better than a pagan, and was entirely out of the pale of salvation. Animated with the fierce zeal of a bigot, he would not have scrupled, if in his power, to use the strong hand of violence to secure converts, and to doom to the stake and to the fagot the unbeliever in all the tenets, whether fundamental or incidental, of Catholicism: for his religion consisted in implicit belief in all the prescriptions of his church, and his church was God. Hence, all government which was not theocratical, or bordering on it, he looked upon as an unlawful and sinful assumption of power, which the church, by all means, was bound to take back, as its legitimate property.

With such dispositions, the Curate de la Vente soon became the terror of his flock, whose frailties he denounced with the epileptic violence of a maniac, and whose slightest delinquencies he threatened with eternal damnation. A fanatic disciplinarian, he had been shocked at the laxity with which the soldiers, the officers, the Canadian boatmen and traders, and the other colonists, performed their religious duties. He did not take into consideration that a judicious allowance ought to be made for the want of education of some, for the temptations which peculiar circumstances threw in the way of others, and for the particular mode of life to

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which all were condemned, and which might be received in extenuation, if not in justification of many faults. He might have reclaimed some by the soothing gentleness of friendly admonition: he discouraged or disgusted all by the roughness of intemperate reproach. Aware of the aversion which he had inspired, and indignant at the evil practices in which some indulged openly from inclination, and others, out of vain bravado to a minister they detested, he had supported Cadillac in all the acts of his administration, in all his representations of the state of the country; and he had himself more than once written to the ministry, that God would never smile upon a colony inhabited by such demons, heathens, and scoffers at the Holy Church; and he had recommended, not a Saint Bartholomew execution, it is true, but a general expulsion of all the people that were in the colony, in order to replace them with a more religious-minded community. As to the Indians, he considered them as sons of perdition, who offered few hopes, if any, of being redeemed from the bondage of Satan.

Seeing that the Ministry had paid no attention to his recommendations, he had determined to make, out of the infidels by whom he was surrounded, as much money as he could, which he intended to apply to the purpose of advancing the interests of the church, in some more favorable spot for the germination of ecclesiastical domination. With this view, he made no scruple to fatten upon the Philistines, and he opened a shop, where he kept for sale, barter, or exchange, a variety of articles of trade. He disposed of them at a price of which the purchasers complained as being most unconscionable; and he also loaned money to the Gentiles, at a rate of interest which was extravagantly usurious. As a salvo to his conscience, he had adopted the comfortable motto that the end justifies the means. The

benighted Indians and the unchristian Christians (to use his own expressions) were not spared by him. When the circumstance was too tempting, and he had to deal with notorious unbelievers, he would even indulge in what he would have called actual cheating, if coming from a Christian dealing with a Christian. On these occasions, he would groan piteously, cross himself devoutly, fall on his knees before the image of our Savior, and striking his breast with compunction, he would exclaim, "O sweet Jesus, if this be an infraction of thy law, it is at least a trifling one, and it is done for the benefit of thy church: forgive me, O Lamb of mercy, and I will, in expiation, say twelve paters and twelve aves at the foot of the altar of thy Virgin Mother, or I will abstain a whole day from all food, in thy honor." After this soliloquy, he would get up, perfectly reconciled with himself and with his Maker, to whom, in these cases, he always took care to keep his plighted word. Many a time, his worldly transactions for the glorification of the church, and for the increase of church property at the expense of those he considered as infidels, forced him to enter into such strange compromises with his conscience and with his God. Hence the origin of the accusation brought against him by Bienville, in one of his dispatches, and which I have already reported, "that he kept open shop, and was a shrewd compound of the Jew and of the Arab." The truth is, that he was sincere in his mistaken faith, pious to the best of his understanding, a Christian in will although not in fact, a zealous priest in his way, which he thought a correct one, and a lamentable compound of fanaticism and imbecility.

In August, 1716, a short time before the recall of Cadillac, there had returned to Mobile a young man named St. Denis, who was a relation of Bienville, and

whom, two years before, Cadillac had sent to Natchitoches, to oppose the Spaniards in an establishment which it was reported they intended to make in that part of the country. His orders were, to proceed afterward to New Mexico, to ascertain if it would not be possible to establish in that direction internal relations of commerce between Louisiana and the Mexican provinces, where it was hoped that Crozat would find a large outlet for his goods. When St. Denis arrived at the village of the Natchitoches, hearing no tidings of the supposed expedition of the Spaniards, he left there a few Canadians, whom he ordered to form a settlement; and, accompanied by twelve others, who were picked men, and by a few Indians, he undertook to accomplish the more difficult part of his mission.

I would recommend this expedition of St. Denis, and his adventures, to any one in search of a subject for literary composition. It is a fruitful theme, affording to the writer the amplest scope for the display of talent of the most varied order. St. Denis is one of the most interesting characters of the early history of Louisiana.

“He hither came, a private gentleman,  
But young and brave, and of a family  
Ancient and noble.”

He was a knight-errant in his feelings and in his doings throughout life, and every thing connected with him, or that came within the purview of his existence, was imbued with the spirit of romance. The noble bearing of his tall, well-proportioned, and remarkably handsome person was in keeping with the lofty spirit of his soul. He was one in whom nature had given the world assurance of a man, and that assurance was so strongly marked in the countenance of St. Denis, that



wherever he appeared, he instantaneously commanded love, respect, and admiration. There are beings who carry in their lineaments the most legible evidence of their past and future fate. Such was St. Denis, and nobody, not even the wild and untutored Indian, could have left his presence, without at least a vague impression that he had seen one not born for the common purposes of ordinary life.

The laborious journey of St. Denis from Mobile to Natchitoches, the incidents connected with it, the description of the country he passed through, and of all the tribes of Indians he visited, would furnish sufficient materials for an interesting book. But what an animated picture might be drawn of that little band of Canadians, with St. Denis and his friend Jallot, the eccentric surgeon, when they crossed the Sabine, and entered upon the ocean-like prairies of the present state of Texas! How they hallooed with joy when they saw the immense surface which spread before them, blackened with herds of buffaloes, that wallowed lazily in the tall luxuriant grass which afforded them such luscious food, and such downy couches for repose! For the sake of variety, the travelers would sometimes turn from nobler to meaner game, from the hunchbacked buffalo to the timid deer that crossed their path. Sometimes they would stumble on a family of bears, and make at their expense a delicious repast, which they enjoyed comfortably seated on piled-up skins, the testimonials of their hunting exploits. Oh! there is sweetness in the prairie air, there is a richness of health and an elasticity of spirit,

“ Which bloated ease ne’er deigned to taste.”

But these pleasures, exciting as they were, would perhaps have palled upon St. Denis and his compan-



ions, and might in the end have been looked upon as tame by them, from the frequency of their repetition, if they had not been intermingled with nobler sport, which consisted in oft-recurring skirmishes with the redoubtable Comanches, upon whose hunting-grounds they had intruded. On these occasions, St. Denis, protected against the arrows of the enemy by a full suit of armor, which he had brought from Europe, and mounted on a small black jennet, as strong as an ox and as fleet as the wind, would rush upon the astonished Indians, and perform such feats with his battle-axe, as those poor savages had never dreamed of. These encounters gave infinite satisfaction to Jallot, who was a passionate lover of his art, and who never was seen in a good humor, except when he was tending a wound. But he had more frequently the chance of dissecting than of curing the poor Indians, for, in most cases, the stroke of the white man's weapon was certain and instantaneous death. Still, he found some compensation in the numerous wounds inflicted by the Indians on his own companions; he had a fondness for arrow wounds, which he declared to be the nicest and genteelest of all wounds. One day, he was so delighted with a wound of this kind, which he pronounced, much to the exasperation of his patient, to be supremely beautiful, that he actually smiled with self-gratulation and cracked a joke!—to do this, his excitement must have been immense. Another day, when an Indian had been struck down by the battle-axe of St. Denis, without, however, being killed outright, he felt such a keen professional emotion at the prospect of probing and nursing a gash which he thought rare and extraordinary, that he frantically jumped upon St. Denis, hugged him with enthusiasm, called him his best friend, passionately thanked him for the most valu-

able case he had given him, and swore that *his Indian* should be carried on, whatever impediment it might be to their march, until he died or was cured. Who would have thought that this man, when he was not wielding his surgical instruments, was the most humane being in the world, and concealed, under an appearance of crabbed malignity, the tenderest sensibilities of the heart? Such are the mysteries of human nature!

St. Denis and his troop reached at last the Rio Bravo, at a Spanish settlement then called the Fort of St. John the Baptist, or Presidio del Norte. Don Pedro de Villescas was the commander of that place. He received the French with the most courteous hospitality, and informed them that he could not make any commercial arrangements with them, but that he would submit their propositions to a superior officer, who was governor of the town of Caouis, situated at the distance of one hundred and eighty miles in the interior. Spaniards are not famous for rapidity of action. Before the message of Villescas was carried to Caouis, and before the expected answer came back to the Presidio Del Norte, St. Denis had loved, not without reciprocity, the beautiful daughter of the old Don. What a pretty tale might be made of it, which would deserve to be written with a feather dropped from Cupid's wing! But when the lovers were still hesitating as to the course they would pursue, and discussing the propriety of making a full disclosure to him who, in the shape of a father, was the arbiter of their destiny, there arrived twenty-five men, sent by Don Gaspardo Anaya, the governor of Caouis, with secret instructions, which were soon made manifest, to the dismay of the lovers; for these emissaries seized St. Denis and his friend Jallot, and conveyed them to Caouis, where they

were detained in prison until the beginning of 1715. From this place of confinement, St. Denis, fearing that the hostility evinced towards him might be extended to the rest of his companions, ordered them to return speedily to Natchitoches.

Ye Bulwers of America, I invite your attention! Here history presents you with the ready-made groundwork for whatever superstructure and embellishments you may choose to imagine for the amusement of your readers.

Don Gaspar do Anaya had been the unsuccessful suitor of Doña Maria, the daughter of Villescás. What must have been his rage, when he was informed by his spies that the new-comer, the brilliant Frenchman, had triumphed, where he had failed! But now he had that hated rival in his clutches, and he was omnipotent, and if the stranger died in the dungeon of Caouis, who, in these distant and rugged mountains, would bring *him*, the *governor*, to an account? Perilous indeed was the situation of St. Denis, and heavy must have been his thoughts in his solitary confinement! But what must have been his indignation when, one day, Anaya descended into his dark cell, and told him that he should be set free on condition that he withdrew his plighted faith to the daughter of Villescás! How swelled the loyal heart of the captive at this base proposal! He vouchsafed no answer, but he gave his oppressor such a look as made him stagger back and retreat with as much precipitation as if the hand of immediate punishment had been lifted up against him.

For six months, St. Denis was thus detained prisoner, and the only consideration which saved his life was the hope, on the part of Anaya, that prolonged sufferings would drive his victim to comply with his request. At the same time, he repeatedly sent secret messengers to

Doña Maria, whose mission was to inform her that her lover would be put to death if she did not wed Anaya. But the noble Castilian maid invariably returned the same answer: "Tell Anaya that I can not marry him as long as St. Denis lives, because St. Denis I love; and tell him that if St. Denis dies, this little Moorish dagger, which was my mother's gift, shall be planted, either by myself or my agent's hand, in the middle of his dastardly heart, wherever he may be." This was said with a gentle voice, with a calm mien, as if it had been an ordinary message, but with such a gleam in the eye as is nowhere to be seen except in Spain's or Arabia's daughters. The words, the look, and the tone, were minutely reported to Anaya, and he paused!—and it is well that he did so, and a bolder heart than his would have hesitated; he knew the indomitable spirit of his race—he knew the old Cantabrian blood—and that Spain's sweetest doves will, when roused, dare the eagle to mortal combat!

The Spanish maid did not remain inactive, and satisfied with deploring her lover's captivity. She dispatched to Mexico a trusty servant, such as is only found in Spanish households, one of those menials that never question the will of their lord or lady, dogs for fidelity, lions for courage, who will tear to pieces whatever is designated to them, if such be the order of their masters. His mission was to find out the means of informing the Viceroy that a Frenchman, a presumed spy, had been for several months in the hands of the governor of Caouis, who was suspected of concealing his captive from the knowledge of the higher authorities, in order to tamper with his prisoner for a ransom. The object of this false information was to excite the jealous attention of the government, and to withdraw St. Denis, at all risks, from the dangerous situation he was in.

This stratagem succeeded, and much to his astonishment, Anaya received a peremptory order to send his prisoner to Mexico, with a sure escort, and at the peril of his head, if he failed !

One morning St. Denis found himself suddenly seated on a strong, powerful horse, amid a detachment of twenty men, who were evidently prepared for a long journey. He asked whither he was to be carried, and was particularly inquisitive about his friend Jallot, who had been put into a separate dungeon, and of whom he had heard nothing since his captivity, but he was dragged away without any answer being given to his inquiries. Seven hundred and fifty miles did he travel without stopping, except it be for such time as was absolutely necessary to take a hurried rest, when the magnificent city of Mexico burst upon his sight in all its imperial splendor. *There*, he flattered himself that he would obtain justice, but he soon experienced that change of place had been for him no more than a change of captivity. Look at the woe-begone prisoner in that horrible dungeon, where he is chained to the wall like a malefactor ! His constitution is completely broken down ; his body is so emaciated by his long sufferings, and by the want of wholesome food, that it presents the appearance of a skeleton ; his long matted hair shrouds his face, and his shaggy beard hangs down to his breast. Who would have recognized the brilliant St. Denis in this miserable object, in this hideous-looking, iron-bound felon—a felon in aspect, if not in reality !

One day, an unusual stir was observed in front of his prison. The short, brief word of command outside, the clashing of arms, the heavy tramping of horses, St. Denis could distinctly hear in his dismal abode. The noise approached ; the doors of his cell turned slowly on their rusty hinges ; on came the bustling and obse-

quious jailer, ushering in an officer who was escorted by a file of soldiers. It was one whom the Viceroy had ordered to examine into the situation of all the prisons of Mexico, and to make a report on their unfortunate tenants. "Who have we here?" said the officer, in an abrupt tone. "I," exclaimed St. Denis, starting to his feet, "I, Juchereau de St. Denis, a gentleman by birth, a prisoner by oppression, and now a suitor for justice." On hearing these words, the officer started back and looked wild with astonishment; then, rushing to St. Denis, and putting his face close to his face, removing with his trembling hand the disheveled locks that concealed the prisoner's features, and scanning every lineament with a rapid but intense look, he said, with a quivering voice, which, through emotion, had sunk to a whisper, "You were born in Canada?" "Yes." "Educated in France, at the Royal College of Paris?" "Yes." "You left France to seek your fortune in Louisiana?" "I did." "By heaven, jailer, off with those accursed chains! quick! set those noble limbs free!" And he threw himself sobbing into the arms of the astonished St. Denis, who thought himself the dupe of a dream, but who at last recognized in his liberator one of the companions of his youth, his best early friend, the Marquis de Larnage, who, with some other young Frenchmen, had entered into the Spanish army, and who had risen to be the Viceroy's favorite aid-de-camp. What a dramatic scene! And would not this incident of Louisianian history be welcomed on the stage by an American audience!

What a change! Here we are in the gorgeous halls of Montezuma, where the barbaric splendor of the Aztec emperors has been improved by the more correct and tasteful application of Spanish magnificence: there is a festival at the palace of the Viceroy:—

"The long carousal shakes the illumined hall;  
Well speeds alike the banquet and the ball."

Noble and beautiful dames!—Silk, brocade, and diamonds!—Gentlemen of high birth—renowned soldiers—glittering uniforms, studded with stars and other decorations—breasts scarred with wounds—brains teeming with aspirations—grave magistrates—sage councillors—subtle diplomatists—scheming heads! What subjects for observation! The walls are alive with paintings which court the eye, or ornamented with mirrors which multiply the reflected beauty of the glorious pageantry. Now and then, scions of the greatest houses of Spain; younger sons, that had been sent to Mexico to better their fortunes; men whose names, when pronounced, sound like a trumpet inciting to heroic exploits, would make their appearance, and to let them pass, the crowd of brilliant guests would reverentially open their ranks. Such is the involuntary respect paid, mechanically as it were, to those who carry round their foreheads the agglomerated rays derived, through the magnifying focus of one thousand years, from the historical distinction of a long, uninterrupted line of illustrious ancestors!

Suddenly, the large folding doors of an inner apartment are thrown open, and the Viceroy is seen at table, with a few favored and envied guests, enjoying the delicacies of the most gorgeous banquet. What an accumulated treasure of gold and silver, under every form that convivial imagination can fancy, and in the shape of plates, dishes, chandeliers, and every sort of admirably chiseled vases! But who is that noble-looking cavalier on the right-hand side of the Viceroy? Can it be St. Denis, the late tenant of a gloomy jail? It is. Presented by his friend, the aid-de-camp, to the representative of the Majesty of Spain, to the Duke of Linares,



he has become such a favorite that his daily and constant attendance is required at court. Nay, the affection which the Viceroy had conceived for St. Denis, had so grown upon that nobleman, that he had insisted upon the young Frenchman being lodged in the palace, where every favor was at his command. The whole city of Mexico had been convulsed with astonishment at the unexpected turn of fortune, which was the lot of the foreign adventurer. Marvelous, indeed, and inexplicable did the fascination exercised by St. Denis on the Viceroy seem to the multitude! Instead of attributing it, perhaps to its true cause, to the congenial affinity of mind to mind, and of heart to heart, they indulged in a thousand wild conjectures. At last, these surmises had settled in the belief that St. Denis had saved the life of the Viceroy, in a nocturnal adventure. It was positively ascertained, however, that St. Denis, a short time after his liberation, passing in a secluded street, heard the clashing of swords. Rushing to the spot from which the noise of conflict came, he saw a man with a mask on his face, and with his back to the wall of a house, who was sorely pressed by three other men, masked also, who were attacking him with the greatest fury. St. Denis took side with the weaker party, and put to flight the cowardly assassins. He never said to whom he had rendered such an eminent service, and if he knew—

—— “ He shunned to show,  
As hardly worth a stranger's care to know ;  
If still more prying such inquiry grew,  
His brow fell darker, and his words more few.”

His secret died with him !

Amid all the festivities of the vice-regal court, St. Denis had but one thought, one aspiration, that of returning to his lady love, and to his friend Jallot. He



had even refused the most brilliant proposals from the Viceroy, such as a high grade in the Spanish army, saying, "I can serve but one God and one king. I am a Frenchman, and highly as I esteem the Spaniards, I can not become one." "But," replied the Viceroy, "you are already half a Spaniard, for you have confessed to me that you love a Spanish maid." "True," observed St. Denis, "but it is not certain that I can marry her, because I consider her father's consent as doubtful." "Well, then, accept my offers," exclaimed the Viceroy, "and I pledge my knightly word to remove every obstacle that may be in your way." St. Denis expressed his thanks, as one overwhelmed with gratitude at such kindness, but could not be shaken from his determination. "At least," continued the Viceroy, "do me one favor. Do not depart now. Take two months for reflection on what you reject. When this delay shall have expired, I will again put this question to you—will you attach yourself to my person, and transfer your allegiance from the Bourbons of France to the Bourbons of Spain?" The two months rapidly flew by, and the chivalric St. Denis remained firm to his purpose. "To lose such a man as you are," said the Viceroy, "is a serious trial to me, but I admire, even in its exaggeration, the sentiment by which you are actuated. Farewell, then, and may God bless you and yours forever. My last hope is, that Doña Maria will induce you to adopt New Spain for your country. With regard to the commercial relations, which, in the name of the governor of Louisiana, you have asked me to permit between that province and those of my government, tell him that it is not in my power to accede to his propositions." The preparations of St. Denis for his departure were not of long duration, for the lady of his heart beckoned to him from the walls of the Presidio del

Norte. The Viceroy presented him with a large sum in gold, which, he graciously said, was intended to pay his wedding expenses. He also sent him, for his journey, a superb Andalusian steed, ordering at the same time that he should be escorted by an officer and two dragoons from the city of Mexico to Caouis.

On the forced departure of St. Denis for the city of Mexico, Jallot had been set at liberty, and had ever since remained at Caouis waiting for the decision of the fate of St. Denis. He was known to be a physician, and as he was the only one within a radius of one hundred miles, he was soon in full practice. In the course of a few months, he had performed so many cures and rendered so many services, that he was looked upon as something almost supernatural. One day, he was summoned to the house of the governor, Don Gaspardo Anaya, whither he went with such a grim smile as clearly indicated that his feelings were in a violent state of excitement. He examined with the most minute care the body of that dignitary, and on his being asked his opinion on the situation of his patient, he went into the most luminous exposition of his disease, and declared that if a certain operation, which he described with much apparent gusto, was not performed, the sick man would certainly die within one month. "Well then," said the governor, "go on with the operation, as soon as you please." "It shall never please me," cried Jallot, in a voice of thunder; and shaking his fist at the enemy of St. Denis, whom, in his turn, he had now in his power, he doggedly withdrew from the house of the infuriated governor. Remonstrances, entreaties, large offerings of money, threats, could not bring him back. At last, the governor swore that he would hang Jallot, and sent some soldiers to arrest him. But the people, who loved Jallot, and feared being deprived

of his invaluable services, rose upon the soldiery, beat them off, and proclaimed that they would hang the governor himself, if he persisted in his intention of hanging Jallot. Matters were in this ticklish situation, when St. Denis returned to Caouis.

In company with his friend Jallot, who was almost distracted with joy at his safe return, St. Denis immediately waited upon the governor, to whom he communicated a letter patent, by which the Viceroy gave authority to St. Denis to inflict upon Anaya, for his abuse of power, any punishment which he might think proper, provided it stopped short of death. The terror of the governor may easily be conceived, but after enjoying his enemy's confusion for a short time, St. Denis tore to pieces the Viceroy's letter, and retired, leaving the culprit, whom he despised, to the castigation of heaven and to the stings of his own conscience. He did more: he had the generosity to request Jallot to perform the operation which this worthy had hitherto so obstinately refused to do. The surgeon, who was mollified by his friend's return, consented, not however without terrific grumblings, to use his surgical skill to relieve the bed-ridden governor, and he admirably succeeded in the difficult operation upon which the fate of his patient depended. But he peremptorily and contemptuously refused the fee that was tendered him, and informed the governor, face to face, and with his roughest tone, that he deserved no remuneration for the cure, because he had saved his life merely out of spite, and under the firm conviction that he would ere long die on the gallows.

Let us now rapidly proceed with St. Denis from Caouis to the Presidio del Norte. There he found a great change;—not that the lady of his love was not as true and as beautiful as ever, but the place looked

lonesome and desolate. The five Indian villages which formed a sort of belt round the Presidio, at a short distance from its walls, were deserted. A gloomy cloud had settled over the spot which he had known so brisk and thriving:—and Villescas told him, with the greatest consternation, that the Indians had withdrawn on account of their having been molested by the Spaniards, who used to go to their villages, and there commit every sort of outrage; that he confessed he was much to be blamed for not having checked sooner the disorderly practices of his subordinates; and that if the Indians persisted in their intention of removing away to distant lands, the government at Mexico, whose settled policy it was to conciliate the frontier Indians, would be informed of what had happened, and would certainly visit him with punishment for official misconduct, negligence or dereliction of duty. “I will run after the fugitives,” exclaimed St. Denis, “and use my best efforts to bring them back.” “Do so,” replied the old man, “and if you succeed, there is nothing in my power, which I can refuse you.” On hearing these words, which made his heart thrill, as it were with an electric shock, St. Denis vaulted on his good Andalusian steed, and started full speed in the direction the Indians had taken. He was followed, far behind, by Jallot, who came trotting along, as fast as he could, on a restive, capricious, ill-looking little animal, for whom he had perversely conceived the greatest affection, perhaps on account of his bad qualities.

The Indians, encumbered with women and children, had been progressing very slowly, with the heavy baggage they were carrying with them, and St. Denis had not traveled long before he discovered from the top of a hill, the moving train; he waved a white flag and redoubled his speed; the Indians stopped and tarried for

his approach. When he came up to them, they formed a dense circle around him, and silently waited for his communication. "My friends!" said St. Denis, "I am sent by the governor of the Presidio del Norte, to tell you that he pleads guilty to his red children; he confesses that you have been long laboring under grievances which he neglected to redress, and that you have been frequently oppressed by those whom it was his duty to keep in the straight path of rectitude. This is a frank avowal, as you see. With regard to the governor himself, you know that he has always been kind and upright, and that, personally and intentionally, he has never wronged any one of you: the old chief has been too weak with his own people—that is all you can say against him. But now, he pledges his faith that no Spaniard shall be allowed to set his foot in your villages without your express consent, and that every sort of protection which you may claim shall be extended over your tribe. Do not, therefore, be obstinate, my friends, and do not keep shut the gates of your hearts, when the pale-faced chief, with his gray hairs, knocks for admittance, but let his words of repentance fall upon your souls, like a refreshing dew, and revive your drooping attachment for him. Do not give up your hereditary hunting-grounds, the cemeteries of your forefathers, and your ancestral villages, with rash precipitancy. Whither are you going? Your native soil does not stick to your feet, and it is the only soil which is always pleasant; and the wheat which grows upon it, is the only grain that will give you tasteful bread; and the sun which shines upon it, is the only sun whose rays do not scorch; and the refreshing showers which fall upon its bosom would elsewhere be impure and brackish water. You do not know what bitter weeds grow in the path of the stranger! You do not know

how heavily the air he breathes weighs on his lungs in distant lands ! And what distant lands will you be permitted to occupy, without fighting desperate battles with the nations upon whose territory you will have trespassed ? When you will be no longer protected by the Spaniards, how will you resist the incessant attacks of the ferocious Comanches, who carry so far and wide their predatory expeditions ? Thus, my friends, the evils you are running to are certain, and behind them, lie concealed in ambush still greater ones, which the keenest eye among you can not detect. But what have you to fear, if you return to your deserted villages ? There, it is true, you will meet some old evils, but you are accustomed to them. That is one advantage ; and, besides, you are given the assurance that to many of them a remedy will be applied. Why not make the experiment, and see how it will work ? But if you persist in going away, and if you fare for the worse, your situation will be irretrievable. On the other hand, if you return, as I advise you, should the governor of the Presidio not keep his word, and should you not be satisfied, it will always be time enough to resume your desperate enterprise of emigration."

This is the substance of what St. Denis told his red auditory, and the Indians, who, perhaps, were beginning to regret the step they had taken, spontaneously marched back, with St. Denis riding triumphantly at their head. They soon met Jallot, jogging along with impatience, cursing and spurring his favorite with desperate energy. When he saw that St. Denis, about whom he was extremely uneasy, was safe, and had succeeded so well in his embassy, he gave a shout which made the welkin ring ; but he was so astonished at his own doing, and at the unusual sound which had so strangely issued from his throat, that he looked round

like a man who was not very sure of his own identity. Those who knew him well remained convinced that this shout had settled in his mind as the most extraordinary event of his life.

Now all is joy again at the Presidio, and the smile of contentment has lighted up the face of the country for miles around. From the Spanish battlements banners wave gayly, the cannons crack their sides with innocent roaring, muskets are discharged in every direction, but from their tubes there do not sally any murderous balls; the whole population, white and red, is dressed in its best apparel; whole sheep, oxen, and buffaloes are roasted in the Homeric style; immense tables are spread in halls, bowers, and under shady trees; whole casks of Spanish wines and of the Mexican *pulque* are broached; the milk and honey of the land flow with unrestrained abundance; the Indians shout, dance, and cut every sort of antics. Well may *all* rejoice, for it is the wedding-day of St. Denis and Doña Maria! Here the long and beautiful procession which is slowly moving to the rustic parochial church, might be described with some effect, but I leave the task to future novel writers. I now dismiss this episode, and only regret that I have not done it the justice which it deserves. Let me add, however, that, after an absence of two years, St. Denis, having returned to Mobile with Don Juan de Villescás, the uncle of his wife, was appointed, in reward for the discharge of his perilous mission, a captain in the French army.

On the recommendation of Crozat, another undertaking was made to open commercial relations with the Spanish provinces of Mexico. Three Canadians, Deléry, Lafrénière and Beaujeu, were intrusted with a considerable amount of merchandise, went up Red River, and endeavored to reach the province of Nuevo Leon,



through Texas;—but this attempt was as unsuccessful as the one made by St. Denis.

On the 9th of March, 1717, three ships belonging to Crozat arrived with three companies of infantry and fifty colonists, with De l'Epinaï, the new governor, and Hubert, the king's commissary. L'Epinaï brought to Bienville the decoration of the cross of St. Louis, and a royal patent, conceding to him, by mean tenure in socage, Horn Island, on the coast of the present State of Alabama. Bienville had demanded in vain that it be erected in his favor into a noble fief.

Hardly had L'Epinaï landed, when he disagreed with Bienville, and the colony was again distracted by two factions, with L'Epinaï on one side and Bienville on the other. There were not at that time in Louisiana more than seven hundred souls, including the military; and thus far, the efforts of Crozat to increase the population had proved miserably abortive. In vain had his agents resorted to every means in their power, to trade with the Spanish provinces, either by land or by sea, either legally or illegally;—several millions' worth of merchandise which he had sent to Louisiana, with the hope of their finding their way to Mexico, had been lost for want of a market. In vain also had expensive researches been made for mines and pearl fisheries. As to the trading in furs with the Indians, it hardly repaid the cost of keeping factories among them. Thus, all the schemes of Crozat had failed. The miserable European population, scattered over Louisiana, was opposed to his monopoly, and contributed, as much as they could, to defeat his plans. As to the officers, they were too much engrossed by their own interest and too intent upon their daily quarrels, to mind any thing else. There was but one thing which, to the despairing Cro-



zat, seemed destined to thrive in Louisiana—that was, the spirit of discord.

In the beginning of the month of August, 1717, Crozat, finding that under the new governor, L'Epinaï, things were likely to move as lamely as before, addressed to the king a petition, in which he informed his Majesty, that his strength was not equal to the enterprise he had undertaken, and that he felt himself rapidly sinking under the weight which rested on his shoulders, and from which he begged his Majesty to relieve him. On the 13th of the same month, the Prince of Bourbon and Marshal D'Estrées accepted, in the name of the king, Crozat's proposition to give up the charter which he had obtained under the preceding reign.

Against his adverse fate Crozat had struggled for five years, but his efforts had been gradually slackening, in proportion with the declining health of his daughter. The cause of his gigantic enterprise had not escaped her penetration, and she had even extorted from him a full confession on the subject. In the first two years of her father's *quasi* sovereignty over Louisiana, she had participated in the excitement of the paternal breast, and had been buoyed up by hope. But although her father tried, with the utmost care, to conceal from her the ill success of his operations, she soon discovered enough to sink her down to a degree of despair, sufficient to undermine in her, slowly but surely, the frail foundations of life; and when Crozat, losing all courage, abandoned to the tossing waves of adversity the ship in which he had embarked the fortune of his house, his daughter could hardly be called a being of this world. On the very day that he had resigned the charter on which reposed such ambitious hopes, and had come back, broken-hearted, to his desolate home, he was imprinting a kiss on his daughter's pale forehead, and pressing her

attenuated hands within his convulsive ones, when her soul suddenly disengaged itself from her body, carrying away the last paternal embrace to the foot of the Almighty's throne.

Crozat laid her gently back on the pillow from which she had half risen, smoothed her clothes, joined her fingers as it were in prayer, and sleeked her hair with the palm of his hands, behaving apparently with the greatest composure. Not a sound of complaint, not a shriek of anguish was heard from him: his breast did not become convulsed with sobs; not a muscle moved in his face. He looked as if he had been changed into a statue of stone: his rigid limbs seemed to move automaton-like; his eyeballs became fixed in their sockets, and his eyelids lost their power of contraction. Calmly, but with an unearthly voice, he gave all the necessary orders for the funeral of his daughter, and even went into the examination of the most minute details of these melancholy preparations. Those who saw him, said that he looked like a dead man performing with unconscious regularity all the functions of life. It was so appalling, that his servants and the few attending friends who had remained attached to his falling fortune, receded with involuntary shudder from his approach, and from the touch of his hand; it was so icy cold! At last the gloomy procession reached the solemn place of repose. The poor father had followed it on foot, with his hand resting on his daughter's coffin, as if afraid that what remained of the being he had loved so ardently might flee away from him. When the tomb was sealed, he waved away the crowd. They dared not disobey when such grief spoke, and Crozat remained alone. For a while he stood staring, as in a trance, at his daughter's tomb: then, a slight twitch of the muscles of the face, and a convulsive quiver of the

lips might have been seen. Sensibility had returned ! He sunk on his knees, and from those eyes, so long dry, there descended, as from a thunder-cloud, a big heavy drop, on the cold sepulchral marble. It was but one solitary tear, the condensed essence of such grief as the human body can not bear ; and as this pearly fragment of the dew of mortal agony fell down on the daughter's sepulchre, the soul of the father took its flight to heaven. Crozat was no more !

“ My task is done—my song hath ceased—my theme  
Has died into an echo : it is fit  
The spell should break of this protracted dream—  
The torch shall be extinguished which hath lit  
My midnight lamp—and what is writ, is writ,—  
Would it were worthier ! But I am not now  
That which I have been—and my visions flit  
Less palpably before me—and the glow,  
Which in my spirit dwelt, is fluttering, faint and low.”

“ Farewell ! a word that must be, and hath been—  
A sound which makes us linger—yet—farewell !”

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NOTE.—Crozat died in 1738, at the age of eighty-three. He had several sons and one daughter, Marie Anne Crozat, who married Le Comte D'Evreux. I hope I shall be forgiven for having slightly deviated from historical truth in the preceding pages with regard to particulars which I deemed of no importance. ~~For instance, I changed the name of Crozat's~~ daughter. Why ? Perhaps it was owing to some capricious whim—~~perhaps there is to me some spell in the name of Andrea.~~

L O U I S I A N A :

*Its History*

AS

A F R E N C H C O L O N Y

~~~~~  
RERUM COGNOSCERE CAUSAS.  
~~~~~

SECOND SERIES OF LECTURES.



P R E F A C E

TO THE SECOND SERIES.

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THE success of my "Romance of the History of Louisiana," from the discovery of that country by Soto, to the surrender by Crozat of the charter which he had obtained from Louis the XIVth, in relation to that French Colony, has been such, that I deem it my duty toward my patrons to resume my pen, and to present the following work to their kind and friendly regard. When I wrote the preceding Lectures, I said, while I mentally addressed the public:

"Right, I note, most mighty souveraine,  
That all this famous antique history  
Of some th' abundance of an idle braine  
Will judged be, and painted forgery,  
Rather than matter of just memory."

SPENSER. *Faerie Queene.*

Nor was I mistaken:—for I was informed that many had taken for the invention of the brain what was but historical truth set in a gilded frame, when, to use the expressions of Sir Joshua Reynolds, I had taken but insignificant liberties with facts, to interest my readers, and make my narration more delightful, in imitation of the painter who, though his work is called *history painting*, gives in reality a poetical representation of facts. The reader will easily perceive, that in the present production, I have been more sparing of embellishments, although "*I well noted, with that worthy gentle-*

*man, Sir Philip Sidney,"* as Raleigh says in his history of the world, "*that historians do borrow of poets not only much of their ornament, but somewhat of their substance.*"

Such is not the case, on this occasion, and I can safely declare that the *substance* of this work, embracing the period from 1717 to 1743, when Bienville, who, with Iberville, had been the founder of the colony, left it forever, rests on such evidence as would be received in a court of justice, and that what I have borrowed of the *poet* for the benefit of the *historian*, is hardly equivalent to the delicately wrought drapery which even the Sculptor would deem necessary, as a graceful appendage to the nakedness of the statue of truth.

NOTE.—The sea-fight which opens the Second Lecture in the Romance of the History of Louisiana, was supposed to be fictitious, it being deemed impossible that a French vessel should have beaten three English ships of superior force. This fact, however, is related by Charlevoix; and manuscripts copied from the archives of the department of marine in France, and now deposited in the office of the Secretary of State at Baton Rouge, will convince the incredulous that the author has not drawn upon his imagination.

# LOUISIANA:

• ITS

## HISTORY AS A FRENCH COLONY.

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### SECOND SERIES OF LECTURES.

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### FIRST LECTURE.

CREATION OF A ROYAL BANK AND OF THE MISSISSIPPI COMPANY—EFFECTS PRODUCED IN FRANCE BY THOSE INSTITUTIONS—WILD HOPES ENTERTAINED FROM THE COLONIZATION OF LOUISIANA—ITS TWOFOLD AND OPPOSITE DESCRIPTION—HISTORY OF LAW FROM HIS BIRTH TO HIS DEATH.

Nothing could be more insignificant than Louisiana in the estimation of her European rulers, when Crozat's charter became one of those things that are among the past. But by one of those rapid transitions so common in human affairs, she was suddenly destined to exercise a wonderful influence over the powerful kingdom of which she was the weak progeny. In her very name there was soon to be discovered something as dazzling to the imagination, as the richest diamond is to the eye of woman. A subtle conjurer arose, who, waving aloft his magical wand, and using that name then so obscure, to give more force to his incantations, prepared for France an intoxicating draught which made her reel as in drunkenness, and nearly prostrated her to the ground, despite of her ever-reviving energies. The star of John Law had risen on the horizon of France: and the Company of the Indies, the great Mississippi scheme,



of which he was the chief projector, the destinies of France and of Louisiana, the expected results of such commerce as the world had never known before, the reports of hidden treasures concealed in inexhaustible mines of silver and gold, were to be indissolubly united in the annals of history and of folly.

On the 13th of August, 1717, the situation of affairs in the colony of Louisiana having been brought before the Council of State at Versailles, it was decided by that body, presided over by the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France during the minority of Louis the XVth, that, "for many essential reasons which it would be superfluous to recite, because they were known to every one, it was to the interest of France that the colony of Louisiana should be fostered and preserved."—Such were the terms of that decree, which went on saying, that, "whereas it had been demonstrated, in the case of Crozat, that the colonization of the province of Louisiana was an undertaking beyond the strength of any private individual: and whereas this undertaking would not become the King, on account of the commercial details which were its inseparable concomitant, it was resolved that Louisiana should be intrusted to the administration of a company." From this resolution sprang the creation of the Western Company, or Company of the Indies, whose charter of incorporation was registered by the parliament of Paris, on the 6th of September, 1717.

Thus the monopoly granted to Crozat ceased, merely to be transferred to a Company. The government of one ruler was to be succeeded by an oligarchy, and the worst of all, a commercial oligarchy, an association of cunning stockjobbers, of robbing directors, and of silly dupes in the shape of stockholders. There were not men wanting at the time who foresaw that the creation

of the famous Company of the Indies, of which Law was the soul, and which became one of the most popular schemes that ever flourished in France, was destined to impart to the colonization of Louisiana only the short-lived appearance of galvanic vitality, but that, ending soon as all delusions do, it would, in its collapse and bursting, be fatal to the speculators engaged in the experiment, and be productive of the most mischievous results to France. Some of these readers of coming events attempted in vain to warn their fellow-citizens against the evils which they predicted. But the weak voice of individual reprobation was drowned in the loud acclamation of the multitude. When the current of the public mind runs impetuously in one direction, when was it ever checked? It sweeps furiously over such obstacles as wisdom or patriotism may interpose, and it even derives fresh impetus from the very attempt to arrest its course.

Who was John Law, to whom the use of the name of Louisiana was destined to give so much celebrity in the beginning of the 18th century? In the romantic city of Edinburgh, the pride of Scotland, he was born in 1671. A checquered and a singularly varied life his was doomed to be, as checquered and varied as the changeful appearance of those ever-flitting clouds which chase each other through the fields of heaven, now assuming fantastic shapes, now dyed in splendor with the morning or evening rays of the sun, or black with the conception of coming storms. Gay halls and gloomy cells there are in the palace of Holyrood, within sight of which that obscure child was cradled, and of which the projecting battlements so often darkened with their shade his curling locks, as he indulged in the gambols of his age. When in his youth he strolled through that antiquated abode of departed royalty, and there gazed

with mixed feelings of admiration and awe at the hoary relics of time, did any prophetic spirit shadow forth to him the gay halls and gloomy cells of his future existence, when he should attain to manhood? The boy had in him the seeds of exalted talent and over-wrought passion. Talent and passion—those unruly steeds upon which, when seated, man not unfrequently speeds away in a mad career, faster than he chooses, whither he heeds not or cares not, and oftener for his ruin than his good, if he does not check them with the reins of morality or the curb of religion.

John Law, or Jessamy Law, or Beau Law, as his playmates called him, for he was as handsome as a mother's heart could wish him, was the son of a goldsmith and banker. Did this circumstance have any influence on his future career, and did he inherit his passion for the precious metals and for banking operations? He was educated in Edinburgh, and he is said to have been no mean adept in versification, if not in poetry. But he soon intuitively discovered that a scribbler's lot was not very enviable, and following the natural bent of his genius, he became so remarkably proficient in mathematics that he could, with the greatest facility, solve the most difficult problems of that abstruse science. He also devoted his attention to the study of trade and manufactures, and made himself master of the principles of public and private credit. He minutely investigated the theory and practice of taxation, and all matters constituting the arcana of political economy. Such were the deep laid and solid foundations of his future eminence.

But John Law was a votary of pleasure as well as of study, and whenever he emerged from his closet, it was to attend the gambling-table, the racing-ground, and to indulge in convivial and amorous exploits. To some

men, excitement of some sort or other is the very breath of life. It is the air which inflates and expands their intellectual lungs. Without it, the flow of their mind would stagnate. Such was John Law. An orphan at the age of fourteen, free from paternal control, and the heir to an ample fortune, he had within his reach all the means of vicious indulgence, and sadly did he avail himself of them to barter away the very altars of his household gods. In 1694, goaded on by the desire of extending his sphere of enjoyments, he paid a visit to London, that great center of attraction, where his wit, his graces, his manly beauty, his numerous attainments, gained him admittance into the best society. There, however, his profusions of every sort, his love for deep play, and his gallantries, soon rid him of his patrimonial lands of Lauriston and Randleston. Their broad acres were converted into guineas which melted away in the hands of prodigality, and thus, in early life, through his own folly, John Law stands before us a bankrupt!

That bankrupt was also an adulterer, and the acknowledged paramour of a Mrs. Lawrence. That intrigue brought him into collision with a Mr. Wilson, whom he killed in a duel. Tried for murder, he was found guilty, sentenced to death, and pardoned by the crown. But an appeal was taken by a brother of the deceased, and the appeal was pending before the King's Bench, when Law, not deeming it prudent to await the result, escaped from his prison, and fled to the continent. Law was then twenty-three years of age. A bankrupt, an adulterer, a murderer, and an exiled outlaw! If to feel is to live, Law had thus gone through an intensity and variety of feelings, which, in the spring of youth, must have made his soul and mind as gray with age, as if over them a century had passed.

To Holland, Law retired for an asylum:—he could not

have made a choice more congenial to his tastes, and no place in Europe could afford more facilities to his favorite investigations on trade, finances, public credit, and political economy, than that country, which, of all others, was peculiarly indebted to them for its national importance, and even for its existence. During his residence there, he took care to improve every opportunity to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the constitution and the practical operation of the Bank of Amsterdam.

John Law was not the man, even in a foreign country, to remain long without friends or protectors, and he soon contrived to ingratiate himself with the British Resident in Holland, of whom he became the secretary. But the phlegmatic temperament of the Dutch not presenting him with the materials which he wished for the accomplishment of such schemes as were ripening in his brain, and having received the assurance that he had no longer any thing to fear on account of the death of Wilson, he returned to Edinburgh in 1700, and in the following year he published a pamphlet under this title: "Proposals and Reasons for establishing a Council of Trade." The proverbial prudence of the Scotch received this work with coldness. Not discouraged by this failure, Law showed the remarkable aptitude which he had to possess himself of the favor of all those whom he thought proper to propitiate, and gained the support of the Duke of Argyle, his sons, the Marquis of Lorn and Lord Archibald Campbell, the Marquis of Tweeddale, and other persons of rank and distinction.

Under their patronage, he presented to the Scottish parliament, in 1705, a plan for removing the difficulties under which the kingdom had then been suffering from the scarcity of money and from the stoppage of payments by the bank; and in illustration of his views on

that subject, he gave publicity to another work, entitled "Money and Trade considered, with a proposal for supplying the nation with money." What could be more tempting! and what a pity that this grand projector did not live in this projecting age of ours! Like other men, he came too soon.

The proposal of Law, says one of his biographers, was that commissioners, created by an act of parliament, and remaining under their control, should be empowered to issue notes, either in the way of loan at ordinary interest, upon landed security, provided the debt should not exceed half, or at the most, two thirds of the value of the lands, or upon land pledges, redeemable within a certain period, to the full value of the land:— or lastly, upon irredeemable sales to the amount of the price agreed upon. Paper money thus issued would, he conceived, be equal in value to gold and silver coin of the same denomination, and might even be preferred to those metals, as not being, like them, liable to fall in value. But this scheme, though powerfully supported by the court party, and by the influence of such men as the Duke of Argyle and others, was rejected by the parliament on the ground that, "to establish any kind of paper credit, so as to oblige it to pass, was an improper expedient for the nation." Wise Scotchmen! They also apprehended that if Law's plan were adopted, all the estates of the kingdom would thereby be brought to a complete dependence upon the bank, or collaterally upon the government, the bank itself being dependent upon the government. It is remarkable that more than a century after, in 1827 and 1833, Law's plan, or one very similar, was put into operation in Louisiana, under the titles of "The Citizens' Bank" and "The Consolidated Association of the Planters of Louisiana," and

that it produced the same disastrous effects that were anticipated by the Scotch in 1705.

It soon became evident to Law, that his countrymen and the English were not sufficiently imaginative to allow him to tempt them into his gigantic experiments, and that to better his fortune, it was necessary that he should seek elsewhere for more pliable instruments. Accordingly he returned to the continent, whither let us follow him, as he flits, like an ignis fatuus, from place to place. Now we see him a man of fashion in Brussels, where his constant success at play brought him into unfavorable notoriety. Then he dashes into the vortex of Paris, where it is said that he introduced the game called Faro, and became still more conspicuous than at Brussels by his enormous gains at the gaming-table. His graceful person, the charms of his conversation, his insinuating manners, were rapidly favoring his ascent into the highest regions of society, when D'Argenson, the Lieutenant or Minister of Police, thought proper to cut short his brilliant career, and to order him out of the kingdom, with this pithy observation, "That Scot is *too expert* at the game which he has introduced."

He retired to Geneva, where he gave an extraordinary proof of his power of extracting money from the driest sources, by gaining large sums at the expense of the sober-minded and close-fisted citizens of that puritanic little commonwealth. In Genoa and in Venice, he gave such evidence of his invariable luck at play, that the magistrates of these two cities deemed it their duty to interfere for the protection of their fellow-citizens, and to banish Law from these over-exhausted theaters of his exploits. At Florence, he became acquainted with the Duke of Vendôme, whom he favored with the loan of a large sum of money. At Neufchatel,



he obtained access to the Prince of Conti, to whom, as to the Duke of Vendôme, he imparted his financial schemes. He was thus skillfully securing protection for the introduction of his plans into France, on the first favorable opportunity. For several years Law rambled over Europe, proposing his financial systems everywhere and to every body. During a short residence at Turin, he pressed the subject on the King of Sardinia, Victor Amadeus—but that prudent sovereign answered: “I am not rich enough to afford being ruined. France is the proper field where your speculative genius ought to cast its seeds, and where you will reap rich harvests. I am sure that your schemes will be to the taste of my mercurial neighbors. To them, therefore, I would advise you to repair.”

This advice seemed to Law a sensible one, and acting under it, he returned to Paris with the enormous sum of two millions and five hundred thousand francs, which were the result of his success in gaming, and of his speculations in stocks and public funds. Soon after his arrival Louis the XIVth died, which was a circumstance favorable to his pretensions. He had no longer to deal only with the prudent Desmarets, comptroller-general of the finances of the state, whose wisdom had discarded the tempting propositions of that adventurer in 1708. But now, in 1716, when the Duke of Orleans, as Regent of France, found himself at the head of the government, the financial situation of France had become desperate. The public debt was immense: it was a legacy bequeathed by the military glory of Louis the XIVth, and the other pompous vanities of his long reign. The consequence was that the load of taxation was overwhelming, merely to pay the interest of this debt, without any hope of diminishing the capital. All the sources of industry were dried up: the very



winds which wafted the barks of commerce seemed to have died away under the pressure of the time: trade stood still: the manufactures were struck with palsy: the merchant, the trader, the artificer, once flourishing in affluence, were now transformed into clamorous beggars, and those who could yet command some small means were preparing to emigrate to foreign parts. The life-blood that animated the kingdom was stagnating in all its arteries: and the danger of an awful crisis became such, that it was actually proposed in the Council of State to expunge the public debt by an act of national bankruptcy. But the Regent has the credit of having rejected the proposition; and a commission was appointed to inquire into the financial situation of the kingdom, and to prepare a remedy for the evil.

It was at that time, when the wisest heads in France were not able to see their way through the embarrassments of the treasury, that John Law came forward with his panacea. It was to liquidate the debt of the state, to increase its revenue, to diminish taxation: and all these prodigies were to be suddenly produced by the easiest process in the world—the creation of a bank, by which fictitious capital, quite as good as any real one, would be produced at will. The Regent, who was incessantly in want of money, and whose ardent imagination was always easily captivated by every daring and extraordinary conception, eagerly jumped at the conclusions presented by Law, or L'as, as he was called by the French. He became even a favorite of that prince, and was admitted into all the licentious privacies of the *Palais Royal*. Soon after, in May, 1716, in spite of the opposition made by all the financiers of the kingdom, Law obtained letters patent, not, it is true, complying with all his magnificent schemes, but establishing on a very limited scale the bank of which he

was the originator, and which was to bear his name, with a capital of six millions of livres, divided into shares of five hundred livres. It was to be a private undertaking, and intended by the government as an experiment.

This institution met with so much success, and became so popular, that in April, 1717, the Council of State assumed the responsibility of ordering that its notes be received as specie by the royal treasury, in all its branches. The influence of Law on the Regent was daily on the increase, and it was he who prevailed on that prince to purchase for the king the celebrated diamond, which, from that circumstance, was called the *Regent*, and which is still the property of republican France, and a part of its public domain. It was a curiosity then thought to be unique of its kind; and the Regent, although strongly tempted, had long hesitated to invest millions in such an unproductive manner, when the revenue of the kingdom was far below its expenses. But Law removed his scruples, by persuading him that he had the means not only of remedying the necessities of France, but of making her richer than she had ever been.

Law now began to develop the stupendous projects he had so long meditated. The success of his private bank had gained him so much credit, that the Regent was induced to change its character, and to make it a royal institution. Law's bank was abolished in December, 1718, to give way to the Royal Bank, of which Law was named the director-general. From that fruitful parent trunk sprung branches which were established at Lyons, Tours, La Rochelle, Orleans, and Amiens.

It will be remembered that, as before stated, the charter of the Mississippi Company had been registered

by the parliament of Paris on the 6th of September, 1717. The capital of the company was one hundred millions of livres, to be furnished by stockholders, and to be divided into shares of five hundred livres. Aliens were permitted to become members of the company, and their shares were exempted from the "*droit d'aubaine*," and from confiscation in case of war. The "*droit d'aubaine*" is the right which the king had to inherit all the property which an alien left at his death. To entice subscribers, their shares were made payable in a depreciated paper currency, called "*billets d'état*," or state bonds, which, however, in the hands of subscribers, were taken at par or full value, although their depreciation amounted to between sixty and seventy per cent. This was such a tempting bait, that it was greedily gulped down by the public, and the subscription was soon more than filled up. By this operation of taking the depreciated paper currency of the state in payment of subscriptions, the company became the creditor of the state for a sum of one hundred millions of livres, on which interest was to be paid at the rate of four per cent.

The following were the principal articles of the company's charter:—

It had the exclusive privilege of trading with Louisiana during twenty-five years, and also the monopoly of the beaver trade with Canada, it being understood that the king reserved to himself the right of determining the number of skins that the company should be bound to purchase annually from the Canadians, at the price fixed by the government of his Majesty.

The company was authorized to make treaties with the Indians, and to wage war against them in cases of necessity. It had taken care to secure the absolute ownership of all the mines which it could discover and

work, and it is needless to say that much reliance was placed on this article of the charter.

The faculty was given to the company of making grants of land, of levying troops, of raising fortifications, of appointing the governors of the colony and the other officers commanding the troops, provided they should, on presentation, be accepted and commissioned by the king. The right of recalling or altering these appointments was also reserved to the company.

To build ships of war and cast cannon, to appoint and remove judges and officers of justice, except those of the Superior Council, were some of the numerous powers granted to this mighty company.

Military officers in Louisiana and all others in the French service were allowed, with the king's license, to enlist in the pay of the company. While in that service, their respective grades in the navies or land forces of the realm were to be retained, and they had the gracious promise of the king that whatever service they might render to the company would be acknowledged as rendered to himself.

By the consular jurisdiction of the city of Paris, all civil suits to which the company might be a party, were to be determined; with a right of appeal, in cases above a certain amount, to the parliament of Paris.

The company was prohibited from employing other than French vessels and crews in trading with Louisiana, and all goods found on the company's vessels were to be presumed its property, unless the contrary was proved.

Frenchmen, removing to Louisiana, were to preserve their national character, and their children, born there, were to be considered as the natural born subjects of the king. The same privilege was granted to the children of all other European settlers in Louisiana, pro-

vided they professed the Roman Catholic religion. To encourage emigration, it was stipulated that during the continuance of the company's charter, the inhabitants of Louisiana were to be exempted from the payment of any tax, duty, or imposition whatever.

To promote the building of vessels in Louisiana, where it was reported that the most magnificent timber existed in its boundless forests, a bounty was to be awarded for every vessel there built, on its arrival in France.

In anticipation of wars with the Indians, it was agreed that forty thousand pounds of powder were to be delivered annually to the company, out of the royal magazines, at the rate of the manufacturing cost.

The stockholders were to have a vote for every fifty shares. During the two first years, the affairs of the company were to be conducted by directors appointed by the king, and afterward, by others, elected triennially by the stockholders.

In order to minister to the religious wants of the colonists, the obligation was laid upon the company to build churches and to provide for a sufficient number of clergymen. It was understood that Louisiana was to remain part of the diocese of Quebec, under whose spiritual authority it had always been since it had been settled by the French.

The company obliged itself to transport to Louisiana, before the expiration of its charter, six thousand white persons and three thousand negroes: but it was stipulated that these persons should not be brought from another French colony, without the consent of the governor of that colony.

In consideration of the charges assumed by the company, its goods were to be exempted from the payment of any duty, and the king promised not to grant any

letters of dispensation or respite to any debtor of the company. He also gave the company the solemn assurance of his effectual protection against any foreign nation.

If the company, as it is seen, took special care to keep its debtors irredeemably within its reach, it was no less solicitous to withdraw itself, as much as possible, from the grasp of any one of the creditors of its stockholders, and it had a clause inserted in its charter, by which the effects, shares, and profits of the stockholders could not be seized and sold either in the hands of its cashier, its clerks, or agents, except it be in cases of open and declared bankruptcy, or on account of the death of the party.

All the lands, coasts, harbors, and islands in the colony of Louisiana were granted to the company, as they were to Crozat, on condition of its taking the customary oath of faith and homage, as practiced in such cases, and of furnishing to every King of France, on his accession to the throne, a crown of gold of the weight of thirty marks.

Thus Louisiana was constituted into a sort of commercial fief, and the Mississippi Company rose almost to the dignity of those great feudatory vassals who, in the days of old, had been, alternately, the pride, the support, and the curse of France. It did not spring into existence, it is true, in the shape of a Duke of Burgundy, who, backed by one hundred thousand men, could, if he pleased, set at defiance his liege Lord, and could proudly enter through the battered walls of Paris, with crested helmet on his head, and the truncheon of command in his hand. But it was perhaps a being more powerful and more dangerous—it was a company—an incorporeal conglomeration, an unfathomable, uncontrollable, unaccountable creation—an agent

with such divided responsibility that it amounted to nothing, and, as Lord Coke says of corporations—a thing without a soul, to which, nevertheless, a power more efficacious and more fearful than that exercised over armed men was delegated—the power of controlling commerce !

Law was appointed director-general of the Mississippi Company, as he had been of the Royal Bank, and both institutions were merged into one another. That would have been power enough to satisfy a less craving ambition, but Law was not the man to stop short in his career of aggrandizement. Thus, he soon obtained that the farm of tobacco, that is the exclusive privilege of selling this favorite weed, be made over to the company by the government, at an advance of rent exceeding two millions of livres. This was a pretty rich feather in his cap, but it was not enough ; and stepping from one acquisition to another, he immediately afterward procured for the company of which he had the absolute control the grant of the charter and effects of the Senegal Company. It was piling up Pelion upon Ossa, and the world stood aghast with astonishment at the extent of the concessions made by the French government to a foreign adventurer. A Royal Bank, the Tobacco farm, the Mississippi Company, and the Senegal Company, with all their millions, rights, privileges, effects and powers, all combined into a gigantic unity !—and that unity put as an instrument into the hands of another unity in the shape of a man ! This was something curious to look at and to study in its operations.

Wise people thought that the climax of folly had been reached ; but John Law laughed in his sleeve at their inexperience, or their ignorance of his skill, and before they had breathing time to recover from their surprise, he gave another proof of his wonderful leger-



demain, by purloining from the French government a still more extraordinary grant than the preceding ones—which was the exclusive privilege of trading to the East Indies, China and the South Seas, together with all the possessions and effects of the China and India Companies, now dissolved, upon condition of liquidating all just claims upon them. It was then that the Company of the West, or Mississippi Company, dropped its original name to take up that of the Company of the Indies, with the privilege of creating additional shares to the amount of twenty-five millions, payable in coin.

This, it seems, ought to have been enough to satiate the most inordinate appetite. Not so with John Law. On the 25th of July, 1719, the mint was made over to the already overgrown Company of the Indies, that huge financial Polyphemus, which owed its existence to the great Scotch projector. This other concession was made for a consideration of fifty millions of livres, to be paid to the king within fifteen months. This time, it might have been permitted to believe that the digestive organs of this boa constrictor, of this king of speculators, were more than overgorged with the accumulation of superabundant nutrition with which they had been so lavishly favored. But John Law asked for something more! Was he shut up in a lunatic asylum for his mad presumption? No!—he obtained what he begged. Will not the dullest mind be stimulated into curiosity, and will not the quick inquiry be: What more could John Law presume to grasp? This:—on the 27th of August, 1719, he obtained for his progeny, the prodigious Company of the Indies, the great farms of the revenues of the kingdom, which the Regent took out of the hands of the farmers general and gave to the company, in consideration of its paying an advance of rent of three millions and a half of livres: and on the



31st of the same month, to cap the climax of all these almost supernatural wonders, Law obtained again for the same company the general receipt or collection of all the other branches of the king's revenues.

Through this curious process of complex annexation and assimilation, John Law had succeeded in erecting the most stupendous financial fabric that has ever been presented to the world. In one company, and through it, in one man, was vested nothing less than the whole privileges, effects and possessions of the foreign trade companies of France, the great farms of the kingdom, the mint, the general receipt of the king's revenues, and the management and property of a royal bank, with an immense capital! Thus, one man, an obscure foreign adventurer, through his creature, the company, had condensed into one lump, which his hands encircled, all the trade, taxes, and revenues of one of the most powerful kingdoms of Europe, and through the Royal Bank he might, according to his will, increase to any amount the circulating medium of that country! Does not this strictly historical sketch smack of the wild conception of a delirious mind? Is not truth often more incredible than fiction, and in reading these lines, would not misanthropy be tempted to exclaim: "Hail to thee, mischievous sorcerer! Three times hail to thee, John Law!"—while poetical fancy would be permitted to inquire if the Weird Sisters, the foul witches of his native heaths, had not furnished him with the spell under the influence of which so many millions of his fellow-beings had been touched with insanity.

It is not astonishing that on the showering of so many grants on the company, its shares gradually rose from 500 to 1000, to 5000 and to 10,000 livres, which was more than sixty times the sum they were originally sold for, if the depreciation of the "*billets d'état*," or state

bonds, with which they were paid, be taken into account. The desire to become stockholder in a company which promised to realize the fable of the hen with golden eggs, was fevered into frenzy. There was a general rush of greedy subscribers, far exceeding the number wanted, and in their struggles to be ranked among the privileged ones whose claims were to be admitted, the greatest interest was exerted, and every stratagem put in practice.

At the same time, the press was teeming with publications on the Mississippi, or the Colony of Louisiana, and France was flooded with pamphlets describing that newly-discovered country, and the advantages which it offered to emigrants. The luxuriant imagination of prolific writers was taxed, to clothe Louisiana with all the perfections they could invent. It was more than the old Eden, so long lost to mankind. There, the picturesque was happily blended with the fertile, and abundance smiled on rocky mountains as on the alluvial plains of the valleys. The climate was such that all the vegetable productions of the globe existed, or could be introduced with success in that favored land. To scratch the soil, would call forth the spontaneous growth of the richest harvests of every kind. All the fruits ever known were to be gathered in profusion from the forests, all the year round, and the most luscious peaches, pears, apples, and other like nutritious delicacies, dropping from their parent boughs, were piled up in heaps under cool shades and on the velvet banks of bubbling streams. There, dust and mud were equally excluded, as the ground was lined in all seasons with a thick carpet of flowers, endless in variety, and perfuming the air with their sweet breath. The finest breed of all domestic or useful animals was there to be found in all the primitive vigor and gentleness of their antediluvian

perfection. The poor peasant who, during a long life in France, had never dreamed of eating meat, would there feed on nothing less than wild ducks, venison, pheasants, snipes and woodcocks. The birds kept up a never-ceasing concert, which would have shamed the opera singing of Paris. The rivers and lakes were stocked with fish, so abundant that they would suffice to nourish millions of men, and so delicate that no king ever had any such on his table.

The seasons were so slightly marked that the country might be said to be blessed with a perpetual spring. None but gentle winds fluttered over this paradise, to fan and keep forever blooming its virgin beauties, and in their gamboling flight through boundless prairies and forests, they produced the effect of Eolian harps, lulling enchanted nature to sleep with heavenly music. The sky was brighter, the sun more gorgeous, the moon more chastely serene and pure, and the nights more lovely than anywhere else. Heaven itself seemed to bend down upon earth in conjugal dalliance, and to environ it with circumambient love. There, it is true, it could not be said to have been positively ascertained that the fountain of eternal youth had been discovered, but it was beyond doubt that there was in the atmosphere a peculiar element which preserved from putrefaction;—and the human body, being impregnated with it, was so little worn out by the action of its organs, that it could keep itself in existence almost indefinitely; and the Indians were known to retain the appearance of youth even after having attained five or six hundred years. Those very Indians had conceived such an attachment for the white men, whom they considered as gods, that they would not allow them to labor, and insisted on performing themselves all the work that might be necessary for the comfort of their pale-faced brethren.

It was profanation in their eye not to minister to all the wants of their idolized guests.

More enticing than all that, was the pretended discovery of inexhaustible mines of gold and silver, which, however, it would not be necessary to work by the usual tedious process, because the whole surface of the country was strewed with lumps of gold, and when the waters of the lakes and rivers were filtered, particularly the thick water of the Mississippi, it yielded an invaluable deposit of gold. As to silver, it was so common that it would become of no value, and would have to be used in the shape of square stones, to pave the public roads. The fields were covered with an indigenous plant which was gifted with the most singular property. The dew which gathered within the perfumed cups of its flowers would, in the course of a single night, be converted into a solid diamond: and the soft texture of the flowers bursting open and dropping down under the weight of its contents, would leave the precious gem resting on the stem in unrobed splendor, and reflecting back the rays of the morning sun. What is written on California in our days would appear tame when compared to the publications on Louisiana in 1719: and the far-famed and extravagant description of the banks of the Mississippi given at a later period by Chateaubriand, would, at the time I speak of, have been hooted at, as doing injustice to the merits of the new possession France had acquired.

When the extreme gullibility of mankind, as demonstrated by the occurrences of every day, is taken into consideration, what I here relate will not appear exaggerated or incredible. Be it as it may, these descriptions were believed in France, and from the towering palace to the humblest shed in the kingdom, nothing else was talked of but Louisiana and its wonders. The

national debt was to be paid instantaneously with the Louisiana gold, France was to purchase or to conquer the rest of the world, and every Frenchman was to be a wealthy lord. There never had been a word invested with such magical charms as the name of Louisiana. It produced delirium in every brain: to Louisiana every one wished to go, as now to California, and some of the most unimproved parts of that colony were actually sold for 30,000 livres the square league, which, considering the difference in value in metallic currency between that time and the present, makes that sum almost equal to twenty thousand dollars at the present day.

Who could describe with sufficient graphic fidelity the intense avidity with which the shares of the Company of the Indies were hunted up? All ranks were seized with the same frantic infatuation. To be a stockholder was to be reputed rich, and the poorest beggar, when he exhibited the proof that by some windfall or other he had become the owner of one single share, rose at once to the importance of a wealthy man, and could command the largest credit. There was a general struggle to raise money, for the purpose of speculating in the stocks of the marvelous company which was to convert every thing it touched into gold. Every kind of property was offered for sale, and made payable in stocks. Castellated domains which had been for centuries the proudly cherished possessions of the same families were bartered away for a mess of financial porridge, and more than one representative of a knightly house doffed off the warm lining that had been bequeathed to him by his ancestors, to dress himself, like a bedlamite, in the worthless rags of unsubstantial paper. Such rapid mutations in real estate the world had never seen before! Lands, palaces, edifices

of every sort, were rapidly shifted from hand to hand, like balls in a tennis-court. It was truly a curious sight to behold a whole chivalrous nation turned into a confused multitude of swindling, brawling, clamorous, frantic stock-jobbers. Holy cardinals, archbishops, bishops, with but too many of their clergy, forgetting their sacred character, were seen to launch their barks on the dead sea of perdition to which they were tempted, and eagerly to throw the fisherman's net into those troubled waters of speculation which were lashed into fury by the demon of avarice. Princes of the royal blood became hawkers of stocks: haughty peers of the realm rushed on the Rialto, and Shylock-like, exulted in bartering and trafficking in bonds. Statesmen, magistrates, warriors, assuming the functions of peddlers, were seen wandering about the streets and public places, offering to buy and to sell stocks, shares, or actions. Nothing else was talked of; the former usual topics of conversation stood still. Not only women, but ladies of the highest rank forgot the occupations of their sex, to rush into the vortex of speculation, and but too many among them sold every thing, not excepting their honor, to become stockholders.

The company having promised an annual dividend of 200 livres on every share of 500 livres, which, it must be remembered, had been originally paid for in depreciated *billets d'état*, or state bonds, making the interest to be received on every share still more enormous, the delirium soon culminated to its highest point. Every thing foreign to the great Mississippi scheme was completely forgotten. The people seemed to have but one pursuit, but one object in life: mechanics dropped their tools, tradesmen closed their shops; there was but one profession, one employment, one occupation, for persons of all ranks—that of speculating in stocks: and the

most moderate, the few who abstained from joining in the wild-goose chase, were so intensely absorbed by the contemplation of the spectacle which was offered to their bewildered gaze, that they took no concern in any thing else. Quincampoix Street, where the offices of the company were kept, was literally blocked up by the crowd which the fury of speculation and the passion for sudden wealth attracted to that spot, and persons were frequently crushed or stifled to death. "Mississippi!—Who wants any Mississippi?"—was bawled out in every lane and by-lane, and every nook and corner of Paris echoed with the word, "Mississippi!"

Immense fortunes were lost or acquired in a few weeks. By stock-jobbing, obscure individuals were suddenly raised from the sewers of poverty to the gilded rooms of princely splendor. Most amusing anecdotes might be told of persons thus stumbling by chance into affluence; and heart-rending stories might be related of such as, from the possession of every luxury, were precipitated into the depths of absolute destitution; while those who had become spontaneously rich, being made giddy with their unexpected acquisitions, launched into such profusions and follies that their return to poverty was as rapid as their accession to wealth, through which it might be said they had only passed with the velocity of steam locomotion. He who could write in all its details the history of that Mississippi bubble, so fatal in its short-lived duration, would give to the world the most instructive composition, made up of the most amusing, ludicrous, monstrous and horrible elements that were ever jumbled together.

The distribution of property underwent more than one grotesque change. The tenants of the parlor or saloon went up to the garret, and the natives of the garret tumbled down into the saloon. Footmen changed



places with their masters, and the outside of carriages happened to become the inside. Law's coachman made such a large fortune that he set up an equipage of his own. Cookmaids and waiting-women appeared at the opera, bedizened in finery like the Queen of Sheba. A baker's son, who used to carry his father's loaves in a basket to his customers, was, by a sudden turn of the wheel of fortune, enabled to purchase plate to the amount of four hundred thousand livres, which he sent to his wife, with the recommendation of having it properly set out for supper, and with the strict injunction of putting in the largest and finest dish his favorite stew of onions and hog's feet. The Marquis d'Oyse, of the family of the Dukes of Villars Brancas, signed a contract of marriage, although he was at the time thirty-three years of age, with the daughter, three years old, of a man named André, who had won millions at the Mississippi lottery. The conditions of the marriage were, that it should take place when the girl should reach her twelfth year, and that, in the mean time, the marquis was to receive three hundred thousand livres in cash, twenty thousand livres every year until the day of the wedding, when several millions would be paid to the husband by the father of the bride. All these meteors, who were thus blazing in their newly-acquired splendor, were called "Mississippians," on account of the source of their fortune.

Let us now turn from the system, to its inventor—to John Law, who, under such circumstances operating in his favor, was adored by the people; and as usual, they were few indeed who refrained from worshiping the idol of the hour, and from burning incense at his shrine. He was a favorite with the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France, of whom he was known to possess the ear; and on his abjuring in the hands of Abbé Tencin, since



a cardinal, the Protestant religion, which was the only obstacle to his advancement to the highest offices of the state, he was appointed, on the 5th of January, 1720 comptroller-general of the finances of the kingdom. To so eminent a personage, England sent, of course, a free and absolute pardon for the murder of Wilson; and Edinburgh, proud of having given him birth, tendered him the freedom of the city in a gold box. Poets, tuning their lyres to sing his apotheosis, declared him to be the *Magnus Apollo* of the age, and the Academy of Sciences elected him one of its honorary members. It is impossible not to pay a tribute of admiration to the talents of that low-born adventurer, who, in less than four years, by his own unassisted exertions, and even in despite of the most strenuous opposition from formidable adversaries, rose from a suspicious position in private life, to be one of the ministers of one of the most powerful and enlightened nations of the world. The Duke of St. Simon, who knew him well, and who writes of him with partiality in his celebrated memoirs, says, that Law had a strong Scotch accent, but that although there was much English in his French, he was extremely persuasive, and that he had the peculiar tact, by assuming an air of exquisite candor, frankness, straightness, and modest diffidence, to throw off their guard those he wished to seduce. With prodigious powers of insinuation and persuasion he must indeed have been gifted, to have operated all the wonders we have seen!

Law, who had the pretension of enriching every body, did not, as it is very natural to suppose, forget his own pecuniary interest, and had purchased no less than fourteen of the most magnificent estates of France with titles annexed to them, and among which was the Marquisate of Rosny; that domain had been owned, and its splendid castle had been occupied as a favorite resi-

dence by the illustrious friend and minister of Henry the IVth, the great Sully, who, before he was created duke of that name, had borne the title of Marquis of Rosny. But Law had attained his highest degree of prosperity, and the wind was already blowing which was to prostrate him to the ground from his towering altitude.

The year 1720, which saw him at the zenith of his prosperity, witnessed also his rapid declension, and his ultimate fall into the abyss of adversity, where he was forever lost. But how dazzling his position was on the 5th day of that year, 1720, when he was appointed comptroller-general of the finances of the kingdom! At that time, he was literally besieged in his splendid palace by a host of applicants and supplicants of every description. His friendship was courted with cringing eagerness by princes, dukes, peers of the realm, marshals and prelates, who reverentially bowed, and bent a supple knee to the upstart, in the mean hope of securing his patronage. Nobles crowded his ante-chambers in democratic conjunction with a motley crew of people of every hue and feather. It was thought to be a lucky accident or a high honor to attract even his passing notice, and ladies of the most exalted rank were not ashamed to ply meretricious smiles to win his favor.

With no very great stretch of the imagination, we may easily conceive the occurrence of such a scene as the following: far from the bustle of the street, and from the crowd which encumbers his apartments of reception, in a retired but richly and tastefully decorated room of his princely residence, John Law is taking his luncheon in the sole company of his son, his daughter, and his pretended wife, who, says the Duke of Saint Simon, was a high-born English lady. Enamored of Law, she had left her family and dignified position in

society, to follow him. She was very haughty, and the superciliousness of her manners was such, that it frequently became impertinent. She rarely paid visits except to the chosen few: she received homage as her due, paid none, and exercised in her house a despotic authority. Her well-shaped person looked noble, and she would have been thought handsome, if a horrid stain of the color of red wine had not covered half of her face and one eye. It is well known that Law always treated her with the utmost respect and tenderness.

Sitting in front of her at a table adorned with exquisitely carved gold and silver implements, Law seemed to be enjoying with peculiar relish the quiet atmosphere of his family circle. Now and then his confidential groom of the bed-chamber glided in, and whispered into his ear the arrival of some distinguished personage who had come to swell the retinue that filled his apartments, and anxiously expected his appearance. At each announcement of a high-sounding name, of a duke, a marshal, a great dignitary of the church, a smile of triumph would flit across his face, and he would cast a look of exultation at his wife, whose natural pride appeared to be intensely alive to the enjoyment which was administered to it by her husband. But Law, keeping his self-composure, would answer, with the utmost unconcern, and without hurrying his meal, whenever a new name was brought in to him: "Well! well! let him wait!" On a sudden, the servant entered again, but not with the same measured step, and cried out with a voice which emotion raised far beyond its usual key: "My lord, his highness the Prince of Conti." Law jumped up as if the irresistible action of a spring in his seat had forced him into his erect attitude, his face became flushed, and his limbs trembled. "Ha!" ex-

claimed he, "a prince of the royal blood under my roof!" But a thought flashed through his brain, he knit his brows, compressed his lips, looked at his wife with an expression of intense pride, and resuming his chair, composedly turned to his servant, and with the same tone of voice with which he had answered every other call, he said: "Let him wait." Here is something to moralize upon, if moralizing was not so flat, stale and unprofitable. A Bourbon, the descendant of a long line of kings, to be kept waiting in the ante-chambers of the son of a Scotch goldsmith! A prince of the royal blood of France to dance attendance on a low adventurer, an exiled outlaw, who had successively and collectively been called the gambler, the swindler, the profligate, the bankrupt, the adulterer, the murderer, the apostate. O the power of gold! Can we not divine the feeling that made Law's blood thrill with excitement! Ours must be one of unmitigated contempt.

Now the scene has shifted, and John Law is rusticating at his castle of Rosny, the once proud seat of Sully, in Normandy. Reclining in a gothic, richly carved chair, with a high back still retaining, chiseled in its oak, the coat-of-arms of Sully, and tapering into a point surmounted by a ducal crown,—in the very chair of state of that haughty feudal baron, and with his feet resting on the lower and more modest chair of the Duchess of Sully, for in those days Sully's wife would not have dared to occupy a seat of equal dignity with that of her lord,—our great financier, John Law, before indulging in his nightly repose, is reckoning up in his mind his acquired wealth, and framing new plans still to increase its already enormous bulk. It is midnight—and the solemn hour of twelve strikes at the big tower's clock! Hist!—a slow, solemn step is heard—it comes from the stair running up the turret which

to declare that they had such a command of funds as to be able to propose lending any sum on proper security at two per cent. But in vain did they put on this show of confidence in their own resources:—the smiling mask deceived nobody. There were symptoms which too plainly denoted approaching dissolution and death. Among those dark spots was the number of bank notes which had been manufactured, and which, on the 1st of May, 1720, exceeded 2600 millions of livres, while the whole specie in the kingdom amounted only to 1300 millions.

Then happened what has been frequently seen since: the superabundance of paper money produced a scarcity of specie. It became evident to the most obtuse that those bank notes had no representative, and that sooner or later they would be no more than worthless rags. As soon as that discovery was made, every one hastened to convert his shares or bank notes into gold or silver, and to realize the fortune he had acquired. The most keen-sighted, or the most prudent, not only exchanged their notes for specie, but sent it out of France; and it is calculated that in this way the kingdom was drained of 500 millions of livres. To avert the danger with which his system was threatened, Law, in less than eight months, promulgated thirty-three edicts to fix the value of gold and silver, to preserve and to increase the metallic circulation, and to limit the amount of gold and silver which might be converted into plate and jewelry. No payment in specie could be made except for small sums: the standard of coin was kept in the most bewildering state of fluctuation, while the value of bank notes was decreed to be invariable. Rents, taxes, and customs, were made payable in paper only:—and as a climax to these high-handed measures, individuals as well as secular or religious communities were prohibited, under very severe penalties, from hav-

ing in their possession more than 500 livres in specie. This ordinance established the most intolerable inquisition, and gave rise to the most vexatious researches on the part of the police. The house of no citizen was free from the visits of the agents of power, and every man trembled to see denunciation lurking by his fireside, and to harbor treason by the very altars of his household gods.

The alarm of the public mind became such, that it was thought necessary to equalize the proportion between the bank notes and the coin; and on the 21st of May, 1720, an edict was issued, which, in violation of the pledge of the state, and of the most solemn stipulations, and as a beginning of bankruptcy, reduced the value of the company's bank notes to one half, and cut down the shares from 10,000, and even 20,000, which was their highest ascent, to 5000 livres. The effect of this edict was instantaneous and overwhelming. At once, all confidence was lost in the bank notes:—general consternation prevailed: and no one would have given twenty cents in hard coin for millions in bank paper. There was a rush on the bank for payment, and one will easily form a conception of the fury, despair and distress of the people, when he is informed that on the stopping of payment by the bank, there was paper in circulation amounting to 2,235,085,590 livres. The whole of it was suddenly reduced to zero. In the whole of France there was but one howl of malediction, and guards had to be given to Law, who had become an object of popular abhorrence. Even the life of the Regent himself was put in jeopardy, and it became necessary to station troops in different parts of Paris, where seditious and inflammatory libels had been posted up and circulated, to increase the confusion and tumultuous disorder which reigned everywhere. It

was apparent that France had been transformed into a volcano, from which the slightest cause would have produced an eruption.

With regard to Louisiana, there had been also a great revolution in the public estimate of her merits. She was no longer described as the land of promise, but as a terrestrial representation of Pandemonium. The whole country was nothing else, it was said, but a vile compound of marshes, lagoons, swamps, bayous, fens, bogs, endless prairies, inextricable and gloomy forests, peopled with every monster of the natural and of the mythological world. The Mississippi rolled onward a muddy and thick substance, which hardly deserved the name of water, and which was alive with every insect and every reptile. Enormous trunks, branches and fragments of trees were swept down by the velocity of the current, and in such quantity as almost to bridge over the bed of the river, and they prevented communication from one bank to the other, by crushing every bark or canoe that attempted the passage. At one epoch of the year, the whole country was overflowed by that mighty river, and then, all the natives betook themselves to the tops of trees, where they roosted and lived like monkeys, and jumped from tree to tree in search of food, or they retired to artificial hills of shells, piled up by preceding generations, where they starved, or fed as they could by fishing excursions.

In many of its parts, the country was nothing but a thin coat, one foot thick, of alluvial soil, kept together on the surface of the water by the intermingled teguments of bind-weeds and the roots of other plants, so that if one walked on this crust, he made it, by the pressure of the weight of his body, heave up around him, in imitation of the waves of the sea, and great was the danger of sinking through this weak texture.



Temptingly looking fruits and berries invited the taste, it is true, but they were all poisonous. Such portion of the colony as was not the production of the Mississippi, and therefore a mere deposit of mud, was the creation of the sea, and consisted in heaps of sand. Hence it was evident, that the country was neither fit for the purposes of commerce nor for those of agriculture, and could not be destined by the Creator for the habitation of civilized man. The sun was so intensely hot, that at noon it could strike a man dead as if with a pistol shot:—it was called a stroke of the sun. Its fiery breath drew from the bogs, fens, and marshes the most pestilential vapors, engendering disease and death. The climate was so damp, that in less than a week a bar of iron would be coated over with rust and eaten up by its corroding tooth. The four seasons of the year would meet in one single day, and a shivering morning was not unfrequently succeeded by a sultry evening. The ear was, by day and by night, assailed by the howls of wolves, and by the croakings of frogs so big that they swallowed children, and could bellow as loud as bulls. Sleep, sweet sleep, nature's balmy restorer, was disturbed, if not altogether made impossible, by the buzz and stings of myriads of mosquitoes, which thickened the atmosphere and incorporated themselves with the very air which the lungs inhaled.

In such a country, the European race of men rapidly degenerated, and in less than three generations was reduced from the best-proportioned size to the dwarfish dimensions of misshapen pigmies. As soon as the emigrant landed, he was seized with disease, and if he recovered, the rosy hue of health had forever fled from his cheeks:—his wrinkled and sallow skin hung loosely on his bones, from which the flesh had almost entirely departed:—his system could never be braced up again:



and he dragged on a miserable, sickly existence, which fortunately was not of long duration. In such a climate, old age was entirely unknown, and the statistical average of life did not exceed ten years. There, man lost the energies both of his body and mind, and through the enervating and baleful influence of the atmosphere, soon became stultified into an indolent idiot. Even the brutish creation did not escape the inflictions to which humanity was subject, and experienced the same rapid transformations. Thus, in a short time, horses were reduced to the size of sheep, cattle to that of rabbits, hogs gradually shrunk up so as to be no bigger than rats, and fowls dwindled into the diminished proportions of sparrows. As to the natives, they were cannibals, who possessed all the malignity and magical arts of demons, and waged incessant war against the emigrants, whose flesh they devoured with peculiar relish. This delineation of the features of Louisiana was very different from those of the first portrait, so many copies of which had been industriously circulated through France. It had been Hyperion; now it was a Satyr.

It is easy to conceive the startling effects produced on the minds of a people already in a paroxysm of consternation, by such malicious misrepresentations, which the enemies of Law took care to scatter far and wide. Thus, the tide of emigration which was pouring onward rolled back, and the prospect of establishing a powerful colony in Louisiana, which, at first, had appeared so feasible, and loomed out to the imagination of the speculator in such vivid colors, and with such fair proportions, was nipped in the bud, and was looked upon as an impossibility. Under the exaggerated and gloomy apprehensions of the moment, no actual tender of money, and no promises of future reward, could have tempted

any body to embark for Louisiana. So universal was the terror inspired by the name of the Mississippi, that (it is a well-known fact) it became even a bugbear of the nursery, and that for half a century after the explosion of Law's great Mississippi scheme, when French children were unruly and unmanageable, and when all threats had proved ineffectual, the mother would, in the last resort, lift up her finger impressively, and in a whispering tone, as if afraid of speaking too loud of something so horrible, would say with a shudder, and with pale lips to her rebellious progeny: "Hush! or I will send you to the Mississippi!" The child looked imploringly into his mother's face, his passion vanished, his cries and sobs were stifled, and under the soft kisses of maternal affection, coupled with the assurance that he never would be sent to the Mississippi, he fell into gentle and undisturbed sleep.

However, the Western or Mississippi Company having contracted the obligation to colonize Louisiana, and to transport thither, within a fixed time, a certain number of emigrants, found itself under the necessity, in order to comply with the terms of its contract, to have recourse to the most iniquitous and unlawful means. As it was indispensable that there should be emigration—when it ceased to be voluntary, it was necessary that it should be forced. Thus violence was resorted to, and throughout France agents were dispatched to kidnap all vagrants, beggars, gipsies, or people of the like description, and women of bad repute. Unfortunately, the power given by the government to these agents of the company was abused in the most infamous manner. It became in their hands an engine of speculation, oppression, and corruption. It is incredible what a number of respectable people of both sexes were put, through bribery, in the hands of these

satellites of an arbitrary government, to gratify private malice and the dark passions or interested views of men in power. A purse of gold slipped into the hand, and a whisper in the ear, went a great way to get rid of obnoxious persons, and many a fearful tale of revenge, of hatred, or of cupidity, might be told of persons who were unsuspectedly seized and carried away to the banks of the Mississippi, before their voices could be heard when crying for justice, or for protection. The dangerous rival, the hated wife, or troublesome husband, the importuning creditor, the prodigal son, or the too long-lived father, the one who happened to be an obstacle to an expected inheritance, or crossed the path of the wealthy or of the powerful, became the victims of their position, and were soon hurried away with the promiscuous herd of thieves, prostitutes, vagabonds, and all sorts of wretches of bad fame who had been swept together, to be transported to Louisiana.

Guarded by a merciless soldiery, they, on their way to sea-ports, crowded the public roads of France like droves of cattle, and as they were hardly furnished with means of subsistence or with clothing by their heartless conductors, who speculated on the food and other supplies with which they were bound to provide their prisoners, they died in large numbers, and their unburied corpses, rotting above ground, struck with terror the inhabitants of the districts through which the woe-begone caravan had passed. At night, they were locked up in barns, when any could be found, and if not, they were forced, the better to prevent escape, to lie down in heaps at the bottom of ditches and holes, and sentinels were put round to watch over them. Hunger and cold pinched the miserable creatures, and their haggard looks, emaciated bodies, and loud wailings, carried desolation everywhere. Such sights, added to

the horrifying descriptions which were given of Louisiana, made its name more terrific to the minds of the people of France than that of the celebrated Bastile and its dark dungeons. Dull indeed must be the imagination of the novelist, who, out of these strictly historical facts, could not extract the most romantic and heart-rending tales!

Law was considered as the author of all these cruelties and misfortunes, and he became still more odious to the people. The parliament of Paris thought that the moment was come at last to pounce upon Law; and to gratify their long-cherished resentment, he was summoned to appear in person before that high tribunal, to answer for his misdeeds and for his violations of the laws of the kingdom. On his refusal or neglect to do so, the parliament ordered him to be arrested, and had determined, on his being brought to the palace where they sat, to close their doors; and in order to prevent the expected interference of the Regent, their intention was to try summarily the hated foreigner, and to hang him in their court-yard. Thus, if the Regent, as it was anticipated, sent troops to batter down the gates of the parliament-house, to save his favorite, they would arrive too late, and would find there nothing but a gallows and a corpse. Aware of this plan, Law left his residence and fled to the Regent's palace, which was the only place where he felt himself secure against the pursuit of his enemies. There he cast himself at the feet of his august protector, and bathed his hands with tears. What a change!

"This is the state of man: to-day he puts forth  
The tender leaves of hope, to-morrow blossoms,  
And bears his blushing honors thick upon him:  
The third day comes a frost,—a killing frost:  
And—when he thinks, good easy man, full surely  
His greatness is a ripening—nips his root,  
And then he falls."

The Regent gave to Law assurance of his protection and vouched for his life; but this was all he could do. He had to bow to the force of public opinion, and to bend to the storm which menaced even his royal person. It was evident that Law could no longer stay in France. In the mean time, the Regent, irritated at the presumption of the parliament, exiled that body to Pontoise; but public indignation still gathering fresh fuel from that very circumstance, the Duke of Orleans provided Law, who resigned the office of comptroller-general, with the means of escaping out of the kingdom. On the 22d of December, 1720, Law arrived at Brussels, where he waited for some time in the vain expectation of being recalled. Far from it, he discovered, to his dismay, that when a man is sliding down the hill of prosperity, his best friends, instead of endeavoring to arrest his fall, will not unfrequently help him down with a kick. Thus, the Great Western or Mississippi Company, to which he had stood sponsor or godfather, lifted up a parricidal hand against him; and under the allegation that his accounts had not been faithfully kept and rendered, had proceeded to seize all his property, and had thereby deprived him of all means of subsistence. He did not lose however the favor of the Regent, who appointed him minister of France at the court of Bavaria, where he resided until the death of that prince. Then he traveled through many parts of Europe, but found everywhere that dame Fortune was tired of smiling upon him. He became but too sensible that he was a discarded lover, and that her favors were bestowed on some other favorite.

In October, 1721, he returned to England, and at first was received with distinction by persons of high rank: he was even presented to George the Ist. It had been shrewdly suspected that he had retained a

considerable portion of his enormous wealth, of which it was presumed that he had been prudent enough, in his palmy days, to send a valuable fraction out of France. But when it was discovered that he was reduced to beggary, people railed at his supreme want of discretion at not providing better for himself, and they felt indignant at the presumptuous cheat, who had been wheedling himself into their society under the false impression that he was rich. As soon as it was ascertained that he was poor, it followed of course that he was nobody, and no longer to be countenanced or noticed. Out of an innumerable host of friends, the Countess of Suffolk was the only one that remained true to him. Let it stand on record in justice to her and for the honor of woman! This indeed was another of those but too striking instances of the mutability of fortune and of the instability of friendship.

In 1722, John Law turned his back upon England for the last time, and returning to the Continent, retired to Venice, where he lived in obscurity, and where he died on the 21st of March, 1729, in a state of indigence, and in the fifty-eighth year of his age. He had lost his wife and his only son, and there remained with him to solace his last moments but one faithful heart, a sweet Antigone, who closed his eyelids. That was his daughter. She afterward married Lord Wallingford in England. A branch of the family of Law has preserved to this day in France a very honorable position in society. A brother whom he left in that kingdom when he fled from it, was taken under the special protection of the Duchess of Bourbon. Through her favor, two of his sons found employment, in 1741, in the service of the East India Company, and greatly distinguished themselves. The eldest one, Law de Lauriston, rose to the rank of major-general, and to be governor-

general of the French possessions in India. He left several sons ; two perished in the unfortunate expedition of La Peyrouse, and one of them lived to be known under the reign of Louis the XVIIIth, as Marquis de Lauriston, a lieutenant-general and a peer of France.

We have followed Law through all the phases of his eventful career, until, crossing with him the Bridge of Sighs, we have left him dying in Venice, "that sea Cybele with her tiara of towers—the revel of the earth—the masque of Italy." A fit tomb for such a man ! Now that the last act of this varied drama has been played, let the curtain drop, leaving to the judgment of impartial posterity the memory of John Law of Edinburgh.

## SECOND LECTURE.

**BIENVILLE APPOINTED GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA FOR THE SECOND TIME, IN THE PLACE OF L'EPINAY—FOUNDATION OF NEW ORLEANS—EXPEDITION OF ST. DENIS, BEAULIEU, AND OTHERS TO MEXICO—ADVENTURES OF ST. DENIS—LAND CONCESSIONS—SLAVE-TRADE—TAKING OF PENSACOLA BY THE FRENCH—THE SPANIARDS RETAKE IT, AND BESIEGE DAUPHINE ISLAND—PENSACOLA AGAIN TAKEN BY THE FRENCH—SITUATION OF THE COUNTRY AS DESCRIBED BY BIENVILLE—THE CHEVALIER DES GRIEUX AND MANON LESCAUT—CHANGES IN THE ORGANIZATION OF THE JUDICIARY—EDIOT IN RELATION TO COMMERCE—ADVENTURES OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE OF BRUNSWICK, OF BELLE ISLE, AND OTHERS—SEAT OF GOVERNMENT TRANSFERRED TO NEW ORLEANS—MISCELLANEOUS FACTS AND EVENTS FROM 1718 TO 1722.**

IN the last lecture, we examined the effects produced in France by the creation of the Mississippi Company, and by the operations of Law's gigantic system of finances. Let us now proceed to ascertain what influence they had on the prosperity and destinies of Louisiana, and to record the series of events accompanying the colonization of the country.

I have already said that Law, who was the director-general of the Royal Bank of France, was also appointed director-general of the Mississippi Company. The other directors were, D'Artaguet, receiver-general of the finances of Auch; Duché, receiver-general of the finances of La Rochelle; Moreau, deputy representative of the merchants of St. Malo; Piou, also the commercial representative and deputy of Nantes; Castaignes and Mouchard, merchants of La Rochelle.

The company, being thus organized, sent three vessels to Louisiana, with three companies of infantry and sixty-nine colonists, who landed on the 9th of March, 1718,



and who, by their presence and the information they brought, revived the hope of better days. The office of Governor of Louisiana was definitively, and for the second time, granted to Bienville, as successor to L'Epiney, who exercised his powers only for a few months, during which he made himself very unpopular, by prohibiting the sale of spirituous liquors to the Indians. The humanity of this provision did not seem to strike the colonists as forcibly as their ruler, and failed to outweigh other considerations. They complained of the want of policy displayed in that ordinance, and they represented, no doubt with truth, that the selling of French brandy was the most profitable article of commerce which they could command, and their most powerful source of influence over the Indian nations. It was, therefore, with great satisfaction, that the colonists learned the nomination of Bienville. Besides, he had passed nineteen years in the colony, of which he was one of the founders: and familiar with all its resources and wants, he had endeared himself to all the inhabitants, every one of whom he knew personally.

The first act of Bienville's new administration was an important one. It was to select the most favorable place on the banks of the Mississippi for the location of the principal establishment of the colony. He chose the spot where now stands the city of New Orleans, and he there left a detachment of fifty men to prepare the ground and erect barracks or sheds. The geography of the country shows it to have been the most judicious choice, and the present importance of New Orleans testifies to the sagacity of Bienville. In so doing, he showed not only foresight and perspicacity, but also great firmness and independence: because he dared to act against the predilections of his government, which had a strong leaning for Manchac, where a natural com-

munication was open with the lakes through bayou Manchac and the river Amite.

The space now occupied by New Orleans was then entirely covered with one of those primitive forests with which we are so familiar. Owing to the annual inundations of the river, it was swampy and marshy, and cut up with a thousand small ravines, ruts, and pools of stagnant waters when the river was low. The site was not inviting to the physical eye, but Bienville looked at it with the mind's vision. His intellect hovered over the whole country, from his native valleys of Canada, down the Mississippi, in the footsteps of La Salle, through those boundless regions whose commercial emporium he foresaw that New Orleans was destined to be. Were I a painter, I would delight in delineating and fixing on living canvas the scene which my imagination conjures up.

Bienville had arrived with his sturdy companions on the preceding evening; and now the sun is peeping through his eastern curtains, and flings a glow of radiancy over the dawning beauty of the morning landscape. In obedience to the command received, fifty axes have, in concert, struck fifty gigantic sons of the forest. With folded arms and abstracted look, Bienville stands on the bank of the river, and seems, from the expression of his face, to be wrapped up in the contemplation of some soul-stirring fancies. Perhaps he had glimpses of the rapid growth of the city of his creation, and was blessed with the revealed prospect of its future grandeur. Far aloft, above his head, the American eagle might have been observed towering with repeated gyrations, and uttering loud shrieks which sounded like tones of command. Of the Indian race only one representative was there. It was an old sibyl-looking woman, who had the wild glance of in-

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sanity or of divination ; and with the solemn gesticulations of prophetic inspiration, she kept singing an uncouth sort of chant, in which she said that the time of which she had been warned by the Great Spirit had come at last: that her death-hour was approaching, which was to be on the day when white men were to take possession of the spot where she had dwelt during a hundred summers and winters, and when they would cut down the oak, under the shade of which she had indulged so long her solitary musings. "The Spirit tells me," so she sang, "that the time will come, when between the river and the lake there will be as many dwellings for the white man as there are trees standing now. The haunts of the red man are doomed, and faint recollections and traditions concerning the very existence of his race will float dimly over the memory of his successors, as unsubstantial, as vague and obscure as the mist which shrouds, on a winter morning, the bed of the father of rivers."

I said before, that, on the return of St. Denis to Mobile, in 1716, after his adventures in Mexico, a vain attempt had been made by Crozat to open commercial relations with the Spanish provinces of North America, and that he had dispatched, with that object in view, three Canadians named Deléry, Lafrénière, and Beaulieu. They were hardly on their way to accomplish their mission, when they were joined by the indefatigable and persevering St. Denis. At Natchitoches they procured mules and horses, and with them continued their march onward. When they reached the first village of the Assinais, where it became necessary for them to rest awhile, and to lay in a stock of provisions, St. Denis, who, it will be remembered, had lately left his wife at the Presidio del Norte shortly after his marriage, and who had reluctantly torn himself from her

embraces to discharge the duty of rendering to the French governor at Mobile an account of his expedition, could not brook any further delay, and leaving abruptly his traveling companions, continued to move forward with a small retinue of followers, but with a considerable number of bales of merchandise. The gallant knight, the lately appointed captain in the French army, had assumed the garb and the occupation of a merchant, and thought himself fully adequate to the fulfillment of the duties incumbent on such a combination of characters.

When Beaulieu, Deléry, and Lafrénière arrived at the Presidio, they were informed of the seizure of the goods and merchandise of St. Denis by the Spanish authorities, and of his departure for Mexico in the hope of obtaining the restoration of his property. Dismayed at such a piece of intelligence, and afraid of the seizure of their own goods, they intrusted them for safe keeping to some monks who did not scruple to turn an honest penny by granting their protection to the helpless, and they at last succeeded in selling on credit every thing they had on hand to certain merchants of Bocca de Leon. They were patiently waiting for payment, when they heard the unwelcome news that St. Denis had been imprisoned at Mexico. Deléry, Beaulieu, and Lafrénière no longer thought of securing the payment of the money to which they were entitled, but of saving their persons from the tender mercies of a Spanish jailer. Carrying away paper recognizances and bonds which were never paid, they departed with the utmost precipitation, and had the good luck to arrive in safety at Mobile in 1718, after an absence of nearly two years, and after having encountered all the fatigues and accidents of a long and perilous journey.

Let us now accompany St. Denis to Mexico. He is

one of those men whom it is pleasant for the historian to keep in sight. Unfortunately for him, when he entered the gates of that city, he had no longer to deal with the Duke of Linares, who had treated him formerly with such extraordinary kindness. The successor of the duke was the Marquis of Valero, whose dispositions did not prove to be so favorable. For some time, however, St. Denis entertained the hope that he would obtain an order setting aside the seizure of his goods. But it so happened that he had traversed the province of Texas without presenting his respects to the governor, Don Martin de Alacorne, and without endeavoring to propitiate his favor. This Spanish functionary, who was very punctilious in all matters of etiquette, construed St. Denis' haste, forgetfulness, or want of ceremony into a slight on his dignity and authority; and drawing the inference that a man so deficient in manners and knightly courtesy could not be but some low-born desperado, he wrote to his government that St. Denis was a suspicious character, fraught with hostile and dangerous designs. This was enough to awaken the jealous susceptibilities of the viceroy, when the settled policy of Spain, as it is well known, was so averse to the introduction of strangers into her colonies. Don Martin's denunciation was believed, and St. Denis was thrown into prison. There he pined for a whole month, but his friends and his wife's relations were active on his behalf, and not only was he released, but he obtained possession of his goods, which were sold very advantageously. They were not only sold, but paid for. This was sunshine at last, but a cloud intervened in the shape of a roguish agent who received the money, and who, thinking it convenient to keep for his own uses what belonged to another, absconded to unknown parts.

St. Denis was a gentleman by birth, a soldier by profession, and a merchant by accident, otherwise he would have been more used to such untoward events, and he would have been less indignant at the gentle, easy, soft and ordinary process of fattening one's purse at the expense of another's. But, exasperated by the series of mishaps which had befallen him, he gave loud vent to his complaints of Spanish treachery and tyranny, and had the imprudence to boast of the desolation he could bring on the frontier provinces of Mexico, if he chose to use the influence he had acquired on the Indians of those regions. The threats of St. Denis were not disregarded, and the government ordered him to be arrested. Fortunately he was advised in time of what was coming, and the numerous relatives of his wife remaining true to him, he was supplied with the means of escape. His flight from Mexico to the Presidio del Norte, with his infinite disguises, his countless adventures, his romantic concealments, his turnings and windings from his pursuers, through the endless length of so many hundred miles of a wild and almost impervious country, would furnish a prolific subject to any driver of the quill who might be in quest of materials. Suffice it for me to say, that leaving the Presidio with his wife, he reached Mobile in safety, and rendered to the company his accounts of the second expedition which he had undertaken under Crozat.

The only benefit which France derived from these daring attempts consisted in the acquisition of correct information concerning the Spanish settlements which existed in the neighborhood of Louisiana. No commonplace man was he who, in those days, could journey twice from Mobile to Mexico, and come back through the same avenue of besetting dangers of every description. He must have been gifted with a singular com-

bination of physical, moral, and intellectual energies. A strong mind endowed with persevering volition, sinews that could command any fatigue, a constitution unconquerable by disease, a heart ignorant of fear,—such were the elements of the organization of St. Denis, who was one of the most remarkable characters of the early history of Louisiana. On his last return from Mexico, he remained ever after in Louisiana, where he became the founder of one of our most respectable families.

Crozat had made vain efforts to trade with the Mexican provinces, and to discover gold and silver mines. The company wisely abstained, for the moment, from committing the same error, and turned its attention to matters which promised better results. It was evident that the monopoly of commerce which had been granted to the company, with a province of an immense extent, it is true, but which had hardly any other inhabitants than Indian tribes, could not, after all, be very profitable; because it is impossible that commerce, whose very breath of life requires the two opposite and equi-ponderant lungs of exportation and importation, should exist on a large scale, where the wants of civilization are not felt. Agriculture, therefore, was one of the first things to be encouraged in the colony; and the company thought that the most effectual mode of producing such a result, was to make large concessions of lands to some of the most wealthy and most powerful personages of the kingdom. Thus, a concession of twelve square miles on Arkansas River, was granted to Law, who, as we have seen, was at that time growing daily upon the favor of the Regent. There were other grants on Yazoo River to a private company, composed of Le Blanc, Secretary of State, the Count de Belleville, the Marquis d'Auleck, and of Le Blond, who, at a later



period, came to Louisiana as commander-in-chief of the engineers of the province. Near Natchez, the company made concessions to Hubert, the king's commissary, or *commissaire ordonnateur*, and to a company of merchants of St. Malo; at Natchitoches on Red River, to Bernard de La Harpe; at Tunicas, to St. Reine; at Pointe Coupée, to de Meuse. The spot where the town of Baton Rouge is now situated, was conceded to Diron d'Artaguet; that part of the right bank of the Mississippi which is opposite Bayou Manchac, to Paris Duvernay; the Tchoupitoulas lands to de Muys; the Oumas, to the Marquis d'Ancenis: the Cannes Brûlées, or Burnt Canes, to the Marquis d'Artagnac; the opposite bank of the river to de Guiche, de La Houssaye and de La Houpe; the bay of St. Louis, to Mme. de Mézières, and Pascagoulas Bay to Mme. de Chaumont.

It had been stipulated between the company and Law, that he should settle a colony of fifteen hundred Germans on the lands which had been granted to him, and that he should keep up, at his own expense, a body of infantry and cavalry sufficient to protect that infant colony against the Indians. The condition of all the other grants of lands was also that the grantees should, within a fixed time, colonize those lands with a certain number of emigrants, in proportion to the extent of the grants. This experiment proved abortive in most cases: many of the landholders whom I have named, occupied such a high position in France, that they had no inducement to emigrate, and they contented themselves with sending some scores of destitute peasants to improve their new estates in America. The climate soon swept most of them into early graves, and the rest, not being placed under the immediate supervision of their patrons, who had remained abroad, and whose agents generally turned out to be unfaithful, careless or incapable, be-



came discouraged, and abandoned themselves to habits of idleness and dissipation.

As it was impossible, however, to promote agriculture without hands to cultivate the soil, the company was driven into the necessity of turning its attention to the slave-trade, and to rely chiefly upon its supplies to do all the field-work in Louisiana. It was represented that slave labor would be cheaper than free labor, and would be within the command of the company on easier terms. The profits of the trade itself were a matter of no trifling consideration. Vessels were, therefore, sent to Africa, and from Africa to Louisiana, with their black cargoes. According to rules established by the company, slaves were to be sold to the *old* inhabitants (so were called those who had been two years in the colony), on these terms: one half cash, and the balance on one year's credit. The *new* inhabitants (that is, those who had been less than two years in the colony) had one and two years' credit granted to them.

In the month of June, 1718, colonists, convicts and troops, in all eight hundred souls, arrived in three vessels. By the order of the company, the colonists were distributed in the following manner: 148 at Natchitoches, under the command of De Laire, Bernard de La Harpe and Brossard; on the Yazoo lands, Mess. Scouvion de la Houssaye and their followers, numbering 82. The balance, amounting to 68, were settled at New Orleans.

From a communication addressed to the company by Bienville, on the 25th of September, it is to be inferred that he was not very well satisfied with the qualifications of all the colonists who had been transported to Louisiana. "There are among them," says he, "very few carpenters and plowmen. The consequence is, that mechanics and journeymen exact wages of ten and fifteen livres a day. This is what retards our improve-

ments, and is a source of enormous expenses to the company."

Thus closed the year 1718, without any thing else worth recording. In the month of April, 1719, two ships of the company arrived from France, and brought the exciting news that war had broke out between France and Spain. At the same time, Bienville received from the company a dispatch, by which he was advised to avail himself of the opportunity which that war offered, to take possession of Pensacola.

Bienville acted on this occasion with commendable rapidity. He had received the authorization, on the 20th of April, to attack Pensacola, and all his preparations were completed in a few days. On the 13th of May, his brother, Serigny, who was employed by the French government in making a survey of the coasts of Louisiana, embarked with one hundred and fifty soldiers, on board the *Philippe*, the *Comte de Toulouse*, and the *Maréchal de Villars*, commanded by M. Méchin and the Chevalier des Grieux, and set sail from Dauphine Island. Bienville, on the same day, followed in a sloop with eighty men. On the 14th, they were before Pensacola, when at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the Spanish governor surrendered, without having attempted any defense. The command of Pensacola was given to Chateaugué, a brother of Bienville. In conformity with the capitulation, in which it was stipulated that the garrison should be sent to the nearest Spanish fort, the Spaniards embarked in the *Comte de Toulouse* and the *Maréchal de Villars*, to be transported to Havana.

Bienville, who had left Pensacola under the command of Chateaugué, felt great uneasiness, produced by his apprehensions of not being able to retain his conquest. What had been so easily acquired might be as easily lost. Pensacola was but slenderly fortified;—

the French who composed the garrison were but few in number, and not very select men. It was evident that an overpowering force might be sent from Havana, before any means could be taken by the company to secure its new acquisition. The fears of Bienville were soon realized, and Pensacola only remained about two months in the hands of the French. When the two French vessels, the Comte de Toulouse and the Maréchal de Villars, entered the port of Havana, with the garrison of Pensacola, the captain-general of the island of Cuba, disregarding the articles of the capitulation, and little heeding the laws of nations, made himself guilty of a breach of faith, and took possession of the Comte de Toulouse and the Maréchal de Villars. He put on board Spanish soldiers and equipages, and sent them back to retake Pensacola, with three ships of the line, nine brigantines, and landing forces amounting to eighteen hundred men.

The Spanish fleet hove in sight of Pensacola on the 6th of August, and the landing took place the next day,—of the two French vessels which were in port, one was burned, and the other captured. Fifty French soldiers deserted immediately to join the Spaniards, and informed them that the rest of their companions were ready to deliver up the forts. Elated by this intelligence, the Spaniards summoned Chateaugué to surrender. The French commander, discovering that he was abandoned by his troops, capitulated on condition that he should come out of Pensacola with the honors of war, and be transported to old Spain with the French garrison. Immediately after the surrender of Pensacola, the commander of the Spanish fleet put a heavy force on board of three brigantines, and sent them to take possession of Dauphine Island, and of the French vessel, the Philippe, which was anchored there.

Serigny was in command of Dauphine Island, and on his being summoned to yield to the superior forces that would attack him, he answered in the negative, and added that he had prepared a warm reception for his visitors, when they should think proper to come.

As soon as it was night, two of the brigantines entered the bay of Mobile, and stopping half-way between Mobile and Dauphine Island, landed thirty-five men to plunder and to burn certain establishments there existing. The owner of the premises was asleep, and little dreamed of the danger which was at his doors. Suddenly, the invaders, confident of success, and secure of their coveted booty, uttered three cheers, and rushed forward, intent on their meditated work of destruction. But what was their dismay, when they were answered with the unexpected and terrific war-whoop of Indians! Before they could recover from their surprise, they were assailed by sixty Indians and some Frenchmen, who, by the order of Bienville, were marching to the relief of Serigny, the commander of Dauphine Island. They had arrived at the midway house, between Mobile and Dauphine Island, just in time to save it from ruin. Five of the enemy were killed and scalped by the Indians; six were drowned in attempting to gain their boats, and eighteen were made prisoners: only six escaped to carry away the melancholy tale of that night's disaster. Several of the French deserters were among the prisoners, and but short shrift was allowed them. As there was no hangman at hand, they were shot.

Two days after this event, the whole Spanish fleet appeared before Dauphine Island, which was defended only by one hundred and sixty Frenchmen and two hundred Indians, under the command of Serigny. Of the 160 Frenchmen, 80 were soldiers, and no more to

be relied on than those who had deserted from Pensacola. Serigny had ordered the French ship, the *Philippe*, to anchor within pistol-shot of the shore, and her fire was supported by a powerful barbet battery constructed on the island. These means of defense appeared so formidable, that the Spaniards dared not come to a close attack, but keeping out of the reach of the French projectiles, amused themselves, during fourteen days, with a vain and empty cannonading. Although they did not venture to bear down direct upon the village itself, which was so well fortified, they made more than one attempt to land on several other parts of the island; but they were met and foiled at every point. In these several attempts at landing, their losses proved to be very great. Disheartened by these repeated failures, the Spaniards abandoned the siege of Dauphine Island on the 26th of August, and returned to Pensacola. Considering the disparity of forces, the defense of Dauphine Island by Serigny was a very gallant deed.

The Spanish sails had hardly vanished from the horizon of Dauphine Island, when three French ships of the line, under the command of the Comte de Champmeslin, with two vessels of the company, which they had convoyed across the Atlantic, loomed in sight on the 1st of September. This apparition put to flight two Spanish brigantines which had been left to cut off communication between Dauphine Island and Mobile. Bienville and Serigny his brother went on board of the admiral's ship as soon as they could, and at their request a council of war was immediately convened, in which it was determined to attack the two forts of Pensacola, and the Spanish fleet which was in the bay. On the 14th, half of the cargoes being discharged, the ships having taken in a new supply of provisions, water,

and wood, and Bienville having had time to gather, equip, and organize a small army of Indians, the expedition departed for Pensacola. Two hundred and fifty soldiers had been embarked on board of the ships, and Bienville went in boats to Perdido River, with such regulars and volunteers as he could bring together. There he found, agreeably to his instructions, five hundred Indians, headed by M. de La Longueville. Without loss of time, he proceeded to invest what was called the GREAT FORT, situated on the main land, so as effectually to prevent all ingress or egress. On the 17th, M. de Champmeslin entered the bay, and attacked the *Small Fort*, which was on the point of the island of St. Rose, and the four ships and five brigantines which were anchored under the protection of the land fortifications. The fort and the fleet surrendered after a severe fight which lasted two hours. The larger fort, which was besieged by Bienville, no longer thought of further resistance, and opened its gates to the French, who made fifteen hundred prisoners. "The Indians," says Bienville in his dispatch, "were frightened at the number of the forces they had dared to encounter and had contributed to conquer, and could hardly believe the evidence of their own senses. It is clear that they are vividly impressed with the conviction of the irresistible power of our arms and of French valor." The fact is, that it was a glorious victory which elated the whole colony, and for many years what was called the Pensacola war, remained a favorite topic of conversation, and a subject of proud recollection which furnished the theme of more than one tale of valor and military achievements.

On board of the captured Spanish ships thirty-five of the French deserters from Pensacola were found. On their being tried, twelve were sentenced to be

hung, and the rest to work for life on the galleys of France.

Bienville availed himself of this opportunity to complain, with great force and truth, of the materials which were put at his disposal to colonize Louisiana. "The Council of State," says he, "will permit me to represent that it is exceedingly painful for an officer, who is intrusted with the destinies of a colony, to have nothing better to defend her than a band of deserters, of smugglers, and of rogues, who are ever ready, not only to abandon their flag, but to turn their arms against their country. Are not most of the people I receive here sent by force? What attachment can they conceive for a colony which they look upon in the light of a prison, and which they can not leave at will? Can it be imagined that they will not use every effort to escape from a position which is odious to them? And is it not known that they can do so with great facility in a country so open as this, and when they can so readily find refuge with the Spaniards or the English? It seems to me absolutely necessary, if it be wished to preserve this colony to the king, to send to it none but those who are willing, and to make life here more attractive than it is for the present. In the first place, in order to accomplish this object, I would recommend to transport here a sufficient number of cattle to supply the colony with fresh meat, and then to transmit provisions of every kind with more regularity and in greater quantity than for the past. If not, the people here will continue to be exceedingly miserable. It must also be taken into consideration that the population and the military forces are so scattered, that in a case of sudden emergency, I have to rely, as means of defense, only on the Indian nations. For the present, I am even deprived of this resource on account of the want of provisions and mer-



chandise to secure their support. But, backed by them, we could resist all the efforts of the Spaniards, although they could act powerfully against us, on account of the proximity of Havana and Vera Cruz. It is to be feared, however, that by cruising with large vessels on our coast, they may cut off our supplies from France. We know this to be their intention, from what we have learned from the French deserters we have retaken. In that case, it would be impossible to preserve the colony."

Thus ended the second expedition against Pensacola. De Lisle, one of the lieutenants of the ships of the line, was put by the French admiral in command of the place, somewhat to the mortification of Bienville, who thought that the disposal of this appointment ought to have been left to him as governor of the colony.

I have spoken of the Chevalier de Grioux or des Grioux, who commanded the *Maréchal de Villars* in the first expedition against Pensacola. Perhaps he was connected by blood as well as by name with the hero of a beautiful novel well known in the literary world, under the title of *Manon Lescaut*, and written by an abbe of the name of Prevost. *Manon Lescaut* was one of those frail creatures who, in such capitals as Paris and London, run a sinful career of alternate splendor and misery. She had become celebrated by the duels and ruinous extravagances of those who had worshiped at her shrine, and who, to use the expression of Demosthenes, had "purchased repentance too dear."

"Ah, vice! how soft are thy voluptuous ways!  
While boyish blood is mantling, who can 'scape  
The fascination of thy magic gaze!  
A cherub hydra round us dost thou gape,  
And mold to every taste thy dear delusive shape."

BYRON.



Spice, jealousy, revenge, or the desire of protecting youthful inexperience against Manon's fascinations, designated her to the arbitrary hand of power, and she was seized by those agents of the government who were recruiting for the colonization of Louisiana. Torn from the lascivious chambers of luxury, she was thrown into a common cart with a promiscuous company of female wretches, and hurried to a seaport. All the way from Paris to Havre, a young man of distinguished birth, but forgetful of what was due to himself, to his family, and to society, followed on foot the vehicle which contained the being whom he loved with that intensity of feeling which produces madness. To have stolen interviews with his mistress, he had given all the money and all the trinkets he had in his possession to the ruthless soldiery who composed her escort. When he had nothing left him with which he could hope to soften the obduracy of the guards, he attempted to touch them by making passionate appeals to what latent sensibility might remain in their breast. He bore patiently with their cruel rebukes and coarse gibes; his meek despair might have disarmed hatred itself. Pale and haggard, this effeminate-looking child of wealth and aristocracy tottered along on the muddy roads, keeping pace with the closely-muffled vehicle which carried away the object of his affection. The frenzy of love sustained him against fatigues, hardships, and contumelies to which he was unused. The soul had absorbed the body and magnetized it into a state of feverish somnambulism. Physical wants became unknown to him, or were not attended to. In that journey, how he appeased hunger and thirst, and tasted of the sweets of sleep, none saw or knew. He seemed to be unconscious of the cold rains of winter which poured down upon his head, or of the snow which stiffened his garments.

All the pitiless elements of an inclement atmosphere pelted him as if in derision, and he heeded them not!

At last, he arrived at Havre, and on his offering to embark as a colonist, his proposition was accepted. On board of a ship, on the broad bosom of the ocean, he found himself reunited to his mistress. Alas! that guilty love should know such transports! What cared des Grieux for the roaring of the winds, for the gathering fury of the waves, and for the black wrath of the coming storm! What cared he for the lurid obscurity of the tempestuous night! Sunshine, the sunshine of paradise, was in his soul. The deep anguish of a mother, the malediction of a father, the blasted hopes of a noble and useful career,—all was forgotten in the bliss of the hour. That bliss, whatever it was, whether perfect in its ecstasy, or whether disturbed by the stings of conscience, whether “*it brought with it airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,*” was not of long duration. Soon after her arrival at New Orleans, Manon Lescaut died a repentant Magdalen, and with her dying breath recommended to des Grieux to return to the path of virtue from which she had induced him to stray but too long. With his own hands, des Grieux dug the grave to which he consigned the body of Manon, and then, with a lock of her hair forever to be worn on his breast, and with her memory indelibly impressed on his soul, he departed for France,

“In helpless—hopeless—brokenness of heart.”

But let us turn from the field of sentiment to a dryer one, where the facts to be collected by the historian, although no doubt more deserving of record, are of a less captivating nature: and let us not lose sight of the details of the administration of affairs in Louisiana.

The directors having called the attention of the gov-

ernment to the changes which new circumstances required in the organization of the colony, the Superior Council of the province was modified by a royal edict promulgated in the month of September, 1719. It was decreed that the new council should be composed *ex officio* of such directors of the company as might happen to be in the colony, of the governor, the two "*Lieutenants de Roi*," or lieutenant-governors, the king's attorney-general, and four other persons. In all civil suits, the quorum was fixed at three, and at five in criminal affairs. In case no quorum could be formed, on account of absence or disease, the members present could complete the number required, out of the ranks of the most respectable persons of the colony. In judicial matters, the jurisdiction of the council was to be only an appellate one, and it was bound to meet at least once in every month. Formerly, the Superior Council had been the only tribunal in the country, and had been clothed with original jurisdiction: but population having increased considerably, it was found necessary to establish inferior courts, and to appoint as judges the directors of the company, or their agents in the several localities where they might reside. Every one of them, with two of the chief men of the vicinage, might take cognizance of any civil affair, and also of criminal matters, with the assistance of four inhabitants having the qualifications required to sit in civil affairs. From their judgment there lay an appeal to the Superior Council. It is to be remarked that, by a special and a very liberal disposition of the royal edict, justice was to be administered without costs to the parties.

The first Superior Council, as formed in conformity with this edict, was composed of Bienville, as governor, of Boisbriant and Chateaugué, as lieutenant-governors, or *lieutenants de roi*, of Hubert, the king's commissary,

or *commissaire ordonnateur*, who was appointed *senior* member of the council, and as such with priority of rank over his puisne colleagues: the other members were L'Archambault, Villardo and Legas, agents of the company, and the king's attorney-general, Cartier de Baune. Couture was appointed clerk to the council.

Although the governor occupied the seat of honor at the council board, yet the *senior* councilor was the actual president of that body. By collecting the votes, he ascertained the sense of the tribunal, and he pronounced its judgments. In all preliminary proceedings, such as the affixing of seals, inventories, and other acts of the like nature, he discharged the duties of a judge of the first instance.

It was the anxious wish of Bienville to transfer the seat of government to New Orleans, on the banks of the Mississippi. But he met with great opposition from his associates in power. When the matter was under discussion, it happened that there was an overflow of the river, which laid the infant city of New Orleans under water. This circumstance gave additional strength to the opposition. It was argued that the company could not, for the present, command the means of erecting the necessary embankments to prevent the annual inundations with which that settlement would be threatened. Hubert, the king's commissary, pleaded strongly in favor of Natchez, but as he owned large tracts of land in that locality, his arguments were little heeded, because it was supposed that they were prompted by self-interest. L'Archambault, Villardo and Legas, who were agents of the company, thought that the commercial views of those they represented would be better promoted by keeping the seat of government on the sea-shore. Their opinion prevailed, and according to their wishes, a detachment of soldiers and of mechanics

was sent to the east side of the Bay of Biloxi, where houses and barracks were ordered to be constructed. That place was called *New Biloxi*, in contradistinction to the first settlement which was made in that bay, and which was ever after known as *Old Biloxi*.

The time had come at last when the colony was beginning to assume the shape of definite existence. It was still very weak, it is true, but it gave stronger signs of vitality than it had done so far. The extreme fertility of the soil had invited the plow and the spade, and had been found admirably adapted to the cultivation of rice, indigo, tobacco, and cotton. It was almost impossible, however, to induce Europeans to attend to the labors of the field, on account of the heat of the climate, and of the diseases which were produced by exposure. The whole agricultural pursuits of the country were therefore carried on, at that time, by one thousand blacks, whom the company had caused to be transported from Africa to Louisiana. It is to be regretted that agriculture and commerce did not solely engross the attention of the directors. But the experience which had been acquired during the twenty preceding years since the foundation of the colony, and which had acted as a check on the wild hopes of *some* of the directors, had not brought to the minds of *all* the conviction that it was wiser to abandon altogether the costly and time-losing researches which had been made for mines of precious metals. Hence the renewal of similar attempts, which proved equally abortive.

On the 26th of November, a royal edict was issued in conformity with the charter granting to the company the privilege of exclusive commerce with Louisiana. That edict declared to the world that any other vessels than those of the company would, on their resorting to the colony for the purposes of trade, incur forfeiture

and confiscation. Such were the events of 1719, among which the most considerable was the conquest of Pensacola.

The opening of the year 1720 was signalized by a proclamation of a remarkable nature, issued throughout the colony in the name of the company. That proclamation informed the inhabitants of Louisiana that they might obtain from the stores of the company at Mobile, Dauphine Island, and Pensacola, all the merchandises and provisions necessary to their wants. In case the colonists should make it a condition of their purchase, that those provisions and merchandises should be delivered at New Orleans, they were to pay in addition a premium of five per cent.;—ten per cent. if to be delivered at Natchez;—thirteen per cent. at the Yazoo;—fifty per cent at the Missouri and Illinois settlements. It was made obligatory upon the colonists to send to New Orleans, to Biloxi, to Ship Island, and to Mobile, the produce of their labor, which the company engaged to purchase at the following prices: silk, according to its quality, from 7½ livres to 10 livres; tobacco, first quality, at 25 livres the hundred pounds; rice, 20 livres; superfine wheat flour, 15 livres; rye, 10 livres; barley and oats, 90 cents; deer skins, from 15 to 20 cents per skin; if dressed and without the head and tail, 30 cents; hides, 8 cents the pound.

It is evident that the colony could not prosper under the system adopted by its rulers. What inducements could any set of men have to emigrate to a country, where they had not only to encounter the dangers of a sickly climate and of savage warfare, but where they were sure to associate with the dregs of the population of the mother country, and to be kept in a state of the most oppressive servitude? They could purchase nothing except from the company, at the prices

requested La Harpe to inform the governor of Louisiana, by whose authority he acted, that if the French did not voluntarily retire, he would resort to force to compel them to keep within their limits. In answer to the astonishment manifested by Don Martin de Alacorne, Bernard de La Harpe declared that he was equally astonished at the pretensions of the Spanish government, considering that France had always looked upon Texas as a part of Louisiana, since La Salle had taken possession of that country, which still retained his mortal remains. He added, that the French government could not admit that the pretensions of Spain could legitimately go beyond the Rio Bravo, because all the rivers which discharge themselves into the Mississippi, and all the lands which they water, ought indisputably to be considered as belonging to France.

It is worthy of remark, that the French government supported La Harpe in the position he had taken, and that the company, with the express authorization of the king, ordered that possession be taken of the Bay of St. Bernard. This order was executed in 1722: but, after a short trial, the French were obliged to give up the settlement which they had established, on account of the implacable hostility of the Indians, whom they could not resist successfully, because their new possession was too far from their chief establishments in Louisiana, to admit of ready relief. It is not the less true that France always called in question the rights which Spain pretended, with so much tenacity, to have to Texas.

Knowing the activity, the energy, and the other qualifications of St. Denis, the company intrusted him with the command of Natchitoches. The rising prosperity of that settlement had excited the jealousy of the Spaniards, and it was believed that they were meditating its destruction.



The company seemed to have taken to heart the obligation to stock Louisiana with the population of which it stood so much in need, and during the year 1720, more than one thousand Europeans, and about five hundred negroes, were transported to that colony. Of the emigrants, about three hundred were to be located at Natchez, sixty on the concessions of De Guiche, one hundred and sixty were destined for the grant of St. Reine, at the Tunicas, two hundred and fifty for the concession of Le Blanc; and the rest were to settle at the Yazooos.

Until now, the colonists had hardly met with any hostility from the Indians, except from the Natchez, as we have seen, under the administration of Cadillac, when Bienville was sent up the river by that governor to demand satisfaction for the murder of several Frenchmen. But the moment was come when their friendship or indifference was to be changed into an animosity productive of ruinous and disastrous wars to the colonists. So long as the colony had remained so weak that she seemed destined to perish prematurely from the radical vices of her imperfect organization, her neighbors, the English, had not thought proper to hasten the work of destruction. But they took umbrage at the more vigorous administration of the company, which, in spite of all its errors of policy, was employing its capital in efforts calculated, if persisted in, to make of Louisiana an important colonial possession to France. England never sleeps when her interest is at stake: and she began to take active but secret steps to check the progress of French colonization on the banks of the Mississippi. Besides, the French and English traders used to meet everywhere among the Indians, and their opposition or competition in commerce soon produced a deep feeling of hostility. Hence originated frequent and partial collisions, in which the In-




dians always took part, and in which they never failed to be divided among themselves: one nation, or one part of a nation, assisting the English, while the French, on their side, were not lacking in the same kind of support.

This state of things gave rise to repeated murders, the recital of which would be but a bloody and uniform catalogue, producing much excitement at the time, but of very little interest in our days. Thus, this year 1720 was marked by a war of the French with the Chickasaws, who were under British influence. Their first act of hostility was to assassinate a French officer named Sorvidal, who had been stationed among them by Bienville, as a spy and an agent of the company. After long negotiations, backed by fair promises of remuneration in merchandise, Bienville succeeded in opposing the Choctaws to the Chickasaws. These, and the Natchez, were the three most powerful nations with which the colony had to deal, and we shall see what a conspicuous part they were destined to play in its history. The other smaller Indian tribes remained in a state of neutrality.

By a royal ordinance, the military forces of Louisiana were fixed at twenty companies of fifty men each. Such were, with the few colonists scattered over an immense territory, the only means of resistance which Bienville had to oppose to the Indians, and to the other foes who might threaten the colony.

There were two causes of complaint on the part of the inhabitants of Louisiana, which the French government attempted to remedy. The first, that there was not in the colony a sufficient number of women; and the second, that the people who were sent to colonize the country were of a character which made them dangerous or contaminating associates for such men of peaceful




habits and honest principles as had voluntarily come to better their fortunes in the colony. Wishing to redress these grievances, the French government authorized three nuns, Sister Gertrude, and under her, Sister Louise and Sister Bergère, to conduct to Louisiana a certain number of girls who were taken from the hospital-general of Paris, on their consenting to emigrate. They were placed under the special supervision of Sister Gertrude, and could not marry without her consent. It was also ordered by the king that convicts and vagabonds should no longer be transported to Louisiana, because "the king is convinced," said the edict, "that their presence is a contagious source of corruption, not only for the Europeans, but also for the aborigines, who are kind-hearted, honest, industrious, and well-disposed toward the French."

On the 3d of January, 1721, a ship of the company arrived with three hundred colonists, who were destined for the lands granted to Mme. de Champeau at Pascagoulas, and in February, eighty girls, who had been taken from a house of correction in Paris, La Salpêtrière, were landed in Louisiana. It may seem that dissolute women were not looked upon as included in the recent royal edict which prohibited the transportation to Louisiana of vagabonds or persons of bad morals; or it may be that this edict was frequently the case with such things, had it merely to stand on paper for some purpose but not to be executed.

Good or bad, however, the population was fast increasing, and the French government considered it sound policy that no agricultural products should be raised in the colony, which might compete with the mother country, and issued a decree of prohibition which prohibited in Louisiana the raising of any

the vine, hemp, flax, &c. &c. Such was the despotic, selfish, and short-sighted policy of what was then called *the colonial system*.

In spite of all the efforts made by the company, what contributed still more powerfully to retard the progress of the colony was the never-ceasing misunderstanding which had existed among its officers since its foundation. They were incessantly counteracting each other by reciprocal opposition. Between their pulling backward and forward, and the struggle of their contention, the distracted colony staggered in its feeble march, and could hardly keep its ground. The reports made by the agents of the company on the situation of its affairs were of the gloomiest character. The disbursements were enormous, and no gains had hitherto accrued to the stockholders, whose dissatisfaction was loudly expressed. The direction was reproached with having made unwise and uncalled-for expenses, which would never be productive, and with having selected officers more solicitous about their own interests than those of the company. The fall of Law, and the crisis which followed, brought down still lower the shares of the stockholders in the Mississippi Company, and their disappointment became excited into clamorous rage. Frightened by the general burst of indignation which assailed them, the directors wrote to Bienville that the Regent had complained of the paucity and inefficacy of his services; that they had excused him with his royal highness on the ground that the very agents of the company had checked or weakened the execution of all his plans; that they would, in consequence, change those agents, and substitute for them such as would be entirely his subordinates; that he would then have a fair opportunity to show what he could do, when left to his own judgment, and to deserve rewards which



would be commensurate with the merit of his deeds; that none but *real* services would gain for him the grade of brigadier-general, at which he aimed, and the great cross of St. Louis, which was the object of his wishes, and which the Regent had promised to bestow upon him when deserved. The directors thus hoped to stimulate the ambition of Bienville into the adoption and the carrying on of a system of administration in the colony, which might prove more advantageous to the company than all the plans which had hitherto been pursued without success.

In the month of March, two hundred German emigrants arrived in the colony. They were sent by Law to settle on his Arkansas concessions, and they had departed from France on the eve of his flight from that kingdom. They were soon followed by five hundred negroes transported from Africa by the company. This was a valuable addition to the population of Louisiana, but the time when it came did not happen to be opportune, on account of the great scarcity of provisions under which the country was then suffering. With these German emigrants there was a woman whose destinies, if they be true as related, bid defiance to the inventions of the wildest romance.

Let us go back to 1712. At that time, the Duke of Brunswick Wolfenbuttel had a daughter named Charlotte, who was a paragon of beauty, of virtue, and of talent. Who would not have loved such a being? And so she was—by every inhabitant of that little duchy. What could be more auspicious than the beginning of such a life! But at that time also, it happened that Peter the Great had a son named Alexis, who, although heir-apparent to the crown, and the future ruler of millions of men, was so steeped in vice, so coated over with stupidity, and so thoroughly im-

bued with wickedness, that his father, as more than one father has done in such cases, sent him on his travels, perhaps in the hope that he would either mend his nature by accidental circumstances, by a change of air or of sights, by a better knowledge of the world and a more extensive acquaintance with mankind, or that he would break his neck on the public roads. In his peregrinations, the Muscovite prince stumbled on the Lilliputian court of Brunswick, and savagely brutish as he was, he felt the charm which the Princess Charlotte exercised on all that appertained to the human creation. The Tzar Peter heard with surprise of the new and strange impression which had been produced on Alexis, and he was led to think that his son was not altogether deprived (a thing which he had always held in doubt) of that organ which is called the heart. Seizing the occasion by the forelock, he ordered the hopeful heir to the Russian throne to marry the German princess. He considered that the bright rays emanating from the perfections of the wife might penetrate into the dark abyss where the imperfections of the husband were pandering to each other, and that the spirit of good might, to some degree, control the spirit of evil, if linked together.

The poor Duke of Brunswick did not venture to give a denial to the demand made by the haughty and powerful despot of the North. But deep was the gloom which, on that occasion, settled over the whole territory of that little duchy, and the marriage ceremony looked more like a funeral than a wedding. Why not? It was the consecration of the union of the dead with the living—nay, something worse—the hideous conjunction of the putrefaction of the charnel with the ambrosial purity of heaven. Amid the general desolation, there was one heart, above all, that was riven asunder, as if

a wedge had been forced into its very core. Look at that pale face sicklied over with grief! What agony is there not in those eyes fixed on that altar, and on that bride, so lovely and so sad! How fearfully the soul works on the human frame, and how indelibly it writes a tale of woe on that expressive and plastic tablet—the forehead of man! He, whose quivering lips denoted the fearful struggle within, was the Chevalier d'Aubant, a young Frenchman, who was attached to the court of Brunswick, as an officer in the Duke's household. Alas! a common one his fate had been since the creation of woman. He had so gazed on the star of beauty—that he had become mad—mad with love!

Now the Princess Charlotte is on her way to St. Petersburg, and fast travelers are those horses of the Ukraine, the wild Mazeppa horses that are speeding away with her! A fast traveler is the Russian bear, who is carrying to his den the prize he has won, but the real merit of which he no more values, than a turkey would know the worth of the diamond picked up by chance, for want of a brickbat, and swallowed to aid its digestion. Among the wild-looking escort of Cossacks who surrounded the princess there was one, however, who seemed fully to appreciate his new sovereign. With his shaggy bonnet pulled down to his eyebrows, and his tartar cloak closely muffled up to his ears, he rode close to the carriage door, with watchful care, and seeming to scan minutely the dangers of the roads. Day and night, he was at his post. Whenever the horses of the vehicle which carried the prince and his bride threatened to become unruly, his hand was always the first to interfere and to check them; and all other services that chance threw in his way, he would render with meek and unobtrusive eagerness; but silent

he was as the tomb. Whenever the princess alighted, deeper and more reverential was his obeisance than that of any of his companions. Once, on such an occasion, no doubt as an honorable reward for his submissive behavior and faithful attendance, the princess beckoned to him to lend her the help of his arm to come down the steps of her carriage. Slight was the touch of that tiny hand; light was the weight of that sylph-like form: and yet the rough Cossack trembled like aspen leaf, and staggered under the convulsive effort which shook his bold frame.

Now the cannon booms, the bells ring merrily, the people shout, drums beat, and a thousand other military instruments strain their brazen throats—the bride of Alexis has come, and enters the imperial palace. On the evening of that very day, a confidential servant slipped into the hand of the Cossack, with whom we have become acquainted, a small sealed bundle, containing two pieces of paper. One was a letter; it ran thus:—

“D'AUBANT,

“Your disguise was not one for *me*. It could not deceive my heart. Now that I am the wife of another, know for the first time my long kept secret—I love you. Such a confession is a declaration that we must never meet again. The mercy of God be upon us both!

CHARLOTTE.”

The other paper was a passport signed by the emperor himself, and giving to the Chevalier d'Aubant permission to leave the empire at his convenience. Before the sun was up, next morning, the princess' wish had been complied with, and d'Aubant was already journeying far away from St. Petersburg.

Whither he went, no one knew, but in 1718, he arrived in Louisiana with the grade of captain in the



colonial troops. Shortly after, he was stationed at New Orleans, where, beyond the discharge of his duties, he shunned the contact of his brother officers, and lived in the utmost solitude. No fault was found with his want of sociability, because although his physiognomy was calm and placid, yet there was in it that indescribable expression which indicated that under it lurked such sorrow as commanded respect and sympathy.

On the bank of Bayou, or river St. John, on the land known in our days as Allard's plantation, and on the very site where now stands the large and airy house which we see, there was a small village of friendly Indians. From the bank opposite the village, beginning where at a much later period was to be erected the bridge which spans the Bayou, a winding path made by the Indians, and subsequently enlarged into *Bayou Road* by the European settlers, ran through a thick forest, and connected the Indian village with the French settlement of New Orleans. With the consent of the Indians, in order the better to indulge in his solitary mood, d'Aubant had there formed a rural retreat, where he spent most of the time he could spare from his military avocations. Plain and rude was the soldier's dwelling; but it contained, as ornament, a full length and admirable portrait of a female surpassingly beautiful, in the contemplation of which d'Aubant would frequently remain absorbed as in a trance. There was in this painting a remarkable feature, no doubt allegorical. Near the figure represented, stood a table on which lay a crown, resting not on a cushion, as usual, but on a heart which it crushed with its weight, and at which the lady gazed with intense melancholy. This painting attracted, of course, a good deal of observation, but no one dared to allude to it. By intui-



tion, every one felt that it was sacred ground on which inquiry ought not to tread.

Where was all the while the Princess Charlotte, the gilded victim of imperial misery? Was she beloved as she deserved by her lord and master, Alexis Petrovitz, the stupid son of Peter the Great? No! the brute had been true to his groveling nature; the swine had gone back to its sty; the gross and sensual appetite of the man, who knew naught beyond the gratification of lustful passion, had turned away from the ethereal charms of the goddess; the prince had bestowed his affections, such as they could be, on one of the female scullions of his kitchens,—a Cossack maid,—a she bear worthy of her mate. One day, entering his wife's apartments, in a state of half-inebriation, he insisted upon her receiving his paramour into her household among her maids of honor. Mild was her negative answer, but decisive and dignified in its tone. Heated by the fumes of his deep potations, fiercely impetuous by the nature which he inherited from his father, and which education had not modified, excited by such contradiction as he was not used to meet, the barbarian prince gradually worked himself into a paroxysm of frantic rage, foamed at the mouth like an infuriated dog, and with the wild gestures and terrific shrieks of a maniac, rushed upon his wife, whom, with repeated blows, he laid prostrate on the floor, senseless and cold in apparent death. Of the bystanders none dared to interfere to protect the victim of brutality; for although dignified with the names of noblemen and gentlemen, they were slaves, and their master a despot. But the justice of heaven was not asleep; and when, not many years after, Alexis the brute showed an undoubted and immutable determination to arrest, when power should be his, the civilization which Peter the

Great was imparting to Russia, Europe stood aghast on witnessing a father butchering his own son.

But the princess has recovered from her swoon, and she is left alone, with her friend and bosom companion, the Countess of Koenigsmark. Long did they converse together in subdued tones, and what they said none ever knew. But if one had, with indiscreet eye, observed the expression of their faces and the nervous contraction of their whispering lips, he would have conceived that these feeble beings had been roused into the commission of some deed of desperate energy. It was evident that the cup of bitterness had overflowed; that enough had been meekly, patiently borne with; that the limits of human endurance had been passed; and in those flashing eyes, although they were those of women, there could be seen the deep-seated resolve, the stern decree of immutable fate. That very night, the Countess of Koenigsmark entered secretly the princess' room, and there was enacted that scene where Friar Lawrence says to Juliet:

“Take thou this phial, being then in bed,  
And this distilled liquor drink thou off:  
When, presently, through all thy veins shall run  
A cold and drowsy humor, which shall seize  
Each vital spirit; for no pulse shall keep  
His natural progress, but surcease to beat.  
No warmth, no breath, shall testify thou liv'st;  
The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade  
To paly ashes; thy eyes' windows fall,  
Like death, when he shuts up the day of life;  
Each part deprived of supple government,  
Shall stiff, and stark, and cold, appear like death;  
And in this borrowed likeness of shrunk death  
Thou shalt remain full two-and-forty hours,  
And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.  
Now when the bridegroom in the morning comes  
To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead.  
Then, (as the manner of our country is,)  
In thy best robes uncovered on the bier,  
Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault,  
Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie.”

The imperial funeral took place, and according to the plan which had been laid, the whole of Europe was deceived. The Princess Charlotte of Brunswick Wolfenbuttel, the *wife* of Alexis Petrowitz, was no more, but the *woman* was not dead—the Juliet that loved a Romeo had burst out of her tomb—poor indeed, unknown, without rank, without family, without menial attendance, but free, with the whole world before her, and with Love and Hope for her handmaids. That was enough!

With the two hundred emigrants who had arrived in March, 1721, there had come, as I have already said, a woman who, by her beauty and by that nameless thing which marks a superior being or extraordinary destinies, had, on her landing at New Orleans, attracted public attention. She immediately inquired for the Chevalier d'Aubant, to whom she pretended to be recommended. She was informed that he was at his retreat on the Bayou St. John, and that he would be sent for. But she eagerly opposed it, and begged that a guide should conduct her to d'Aubant's rural dwelling.

It was on a vernal evening, and the last rays of the sun were lingering in the west. Seated in front of the portrait which we know, d'Aubant, with his eyes rooted to the ground, seemed to be plunged in deep reverie. Suddenly he looked up—gracious heaven! it was no longer a mere inanimate representation of fictitious life which he saw—it was flesh and blood—the dead was alive again—and confronting him with a smile so sweet and sad—with eyes moist with rapturous tears—and with such an expression of concentrated love as can only be borrowed from the abode of bliss above. “O God!” exclaimed d'Aubant, starting up and convulsively pressing his forehead with his hands, “what phantasy of a fevered brain is this! Mercy on me!—I

am mad!" But soon he felt that the being who nestled in his bosom, that the arms folded round his neck, were not creations of a delirious imagination. What pen could do justice to this scene? Away then with description! What need should there be of any effort of the mind to paint what the heart can so easily conceive! Suffice it to say that, on the next day, the Chevalier d'Aubant was married to the mysterious stranger, who gave no other name to the inquiring priest than that of Charlotte. In commemoration of this event, they planted those two oaks, which, looking like twins and interlocking their leafy arms, are, to this day, to be seen standing side by side on the bank of the St. John, and bathing their feet in the stream, a little to the right of the bridge, as you cross it, in front of Allard's plantation.

It is strange how the most secret events will transpire! With the fluidity of gas, they evaporate through thick walls of stone, and are scattered over the whole world. For instance, what gave currency at the time to the circumstances which I have related? By what concealed agency events are known with astonishingly minute precision in distant places, long before they could be carried there by any physical process? Is it second sight, magnetic perception, supernatural intuition, or the electric traveling of the mind? Are there mysterious carriers of news through heaven and earth? Certain it is, that although d'Aubant and his wife kept their own secret and lived in almost monastic retirement, rumors about their wonderful history were so rife in the colony, and the attention of which they became the objects, subjected them to so much uneasiness, that d'Aubant contrived to leave the country soon after, and went to Paris, where his wife having met the Marshal of Saxe in the garden of the Tuileries,

and being recognized by him, escaped detection with the greatest difficulty. D'Aubant departed with the grade of major for the Island of Bourbon, where he resided for a considerable time. In 1754, on his death, his widow returned to Paris with a daughter, the only offspring of her union with d'Aubant, and in 1771, she died in a state bordering on destitution. The particulars of this adventure are found in many memoirs of the epoch, and in the notes and papers of Duclos: but Lévesque, in his history of Russia, Grimm, in his correspondence, and the sceptic Voltaire, in a letter which he published on the 19th February, 1781, deny the truth of the story as being too improbable. However, the experience of centuries teaches us that nothing is more probable than improbabilities: and must it not be inferred that there was some foundation for the romantic incidents I have recorded, when they assumed such a substantial shape as to become a subject of serious controversy with men of the highest distinction?

On the 5th of September, a council of administration for the affairs of the company in Louisiana was organized, and composed as follows:—the governor, the lieutenant de roi, or lieutenant-governor, the directeur ordonnateur, or commissary director, the chief director, and sub-director of accounts. This council was to meet every day at New Biloxi, where its members were bound to reside, with the exception of Bienville, the governor, who was permitted to reside at New Orleans. The deliberations of the council were to be faithfully recorded: of which journal, copies were to be sent to France, and it is to be regretted that this record has not been transmitted to us.

It was ordered, by a decree, that the merchandise of the company should be sold at New Orleans, Biloxi, and Mobile, at fifty per cent. profit on their original

cost in France ; at Natchez and Yazoo, seventy per cent. ; at Arkansas, at one hundred per cent. ; and at the Alibamons, at fifty per cent., on account, as it was expressed, *of the competition arising from the proximity of British settlements*. On the 27th of the same month, it was determined that negroes should, on an average, be sold to the inhabitants for 660 livres, for which their notes were to be furnished, on three years' credit, payable by equal instalments, either in tobacco or in rice, according to agreement. When two terms became due, if the purchaser could not pay one third of the amount, the negroes were resold, after due publication, and after notice given of the sale to the public. When the result of the sale was not such as to pay the company, and to meet all other expenses, the debtor was liable to imprisonment.

Tobacco, *en feuilles*, or leaf tobacco, fair quality, was to be received in payment of negroes, at the rate of twenty-five cents per hundred pounds, and rice at twelve cents, when delivered at the company's warehouses at New Orleans, New Biloxi, or Mobile. Wine was to be sold by the company at 120 livres per cask, and brandy at the same price for a quarter of a cask.

Louisiana was divided into nine territorial districts, such as New Orleans, Biloxi, Mobile, Alibamons, Natchez, Yazoo, Natchitoches, Arkansas and Illinois. There were to be for each district a commander or governor, and a judge from whose decisions appeals could be taken to the Superior Council, sitting at New Biloxi. This order of things was established, as stated in the decree, *to put justice, with greater ease, within reach of the colonists*.

In the month of June of the year 1721, there remained in the colony six hundred negroes, and four hundred out of the five hundred colonists who were in

the country, when Crozat had given up his charter. Seven thousand and twenty individuals had been transported by the company in forty-three vessels specially employed for that purpose, from the 25th of October, 1717, to May, 1721. But of this number about 2000 having died, deserted, or returned to France by permission, the remaining white population did not exceed 5420 souls. The expenses of administration, however, although the territory was so thinly peopled, proved very considerable, and amounted, this year, to 474,274 livres.

A ship of the company had left France in 1718, with troops and one hundred convicts, but had never been heard of. Toward the close of the year 1721, there arrived in Louisiana, a French officer who gave some account of the ill-fated vessel. It appears that her captain had mistaken the mouth of the Mississippi, and had entered, by the 29th degree of latitude, into a large bay, where he at last, but too late, discovered his error. Hardly had the ship anchored, when a contagious epidemic broke out among the convicts, and produced such dreadful havoc, that five of the officers, named Belleisle, Allard, De Lisle, Legendre and Corlat, thought that it would be less dangerous for them to land, well provided with arms and with eight days' provisions, than to remain on board in a pestiferous atmosphere. Their hope was to meet with some friendly Indian who could guide them to the French settlements, which they conjectured to be not far off. In the mean time, the ship sailed away, and of her there never was any further tidings. For several days the five adventurers wandered in every direction without discovering any habitation, or meeting any human being. They exhausted their provisions and ammunition, and had to rely altogether on the scanty supply of food they could procure. Unused to the climate, broken down by privations of



every kind, Allard was the first to perish;—De Lisle followed;—soon after Legendre dropped into the grave which Corlat and Belleisle dug for him. Then these two men looked at each other with mute despair in that boundless wilderness by which they were encompassed, and they seemed to scrutinize each other's face to ascertain which of the two would bury the other one. A few days had hardly elapsed, when Corlat bade a last farewell to Belleisle, and yielded the ghost. Belleisle covered his companion's corpse with dry leaves, branches and bushes, and then threw himself on the ground with the determination to die. But the love of life is strong in man's breast, and at last he braced up his energies to escape from the death he had but lately coveted. He sought the sea-shore, where he lived on the contents of shells, on fish, and on roots, anxiously passing many a weary day in studying the broad expanse of the Gulf of Mexico, with the hope that some vessel might heave in sight.

Months elapsed—and there was no prospect of relief. His tattered clothes had dropped from his limbs: exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather, living on unwholesome food, sometimes deprived of any, worn out by mental anxiety as well as by bodily sufferings, he was reduced to a frightful state of emaciation;—and with his overgrown shaggy hair and beard, he looked more like a wild beast than a man. His strength was gradually failing, he felt that life was fast ebbing away, and that a slow, lingering death—the death of starvation—was staring him in the face. One day that he was lying on the ground, incapable, as he thought, of motion, and with his feeble vision scanning the horizon which seemed to dance round him, as it receded and faded away from his swimming sight, he fancied he saw a light grayish smoke rising slowly above the dis-



tant trees, in the heart of the forest. Oh! how his heart leaped within his breast!—he shaded his eyes with his tremulous hands, and looked again with fearful doubt and agonizing anxiety. Yes!—it was a smoke! And the gladful conviction flashing on his soul, drew a flood of tears down his wasted and hollow cheeks. He raised his skeleton hands toward heaven, and with a full heart thanked the Almighty. Then up to his feet he sprang—but he staggered back and fell. Good God! will the miserable remnant of his physical powers, although so powerfully stimulated by the prospect of relief, fail him entirely when most needed—at such a critical moment! Making a desperate effort, he rose again and reeled forward to some distance. Then, he crept along like a snake—now panting with exertion and fatigue—now resting awhile—now again dragging himself painfully, with his eyes stretched and riveted on the merrily curling smoke. Oh! how he trembled that it should suddenly disappear! His excitement grew more intense as he drew nearer, and at last he thought that he was within hearing distance. He shouted, or thought he shouted; but his parched throat emitted no sound which reached his own ears.

Three Indians were quietly seated round a brisk fire and roasting luscious venison, the juice of which falling on the live embers produced a grateful hissing sound, and emitted a savory smell, when a slight cracking—the snapping of a dry twig, caught their attention and awoke their suspicion. With one simultaneous bound they sprung—one with uplifted tomahawk—the other two with raised bows ready to fling their deadly arrows. But they dropped their weapons, when they ascertained what object stood before them. It was Belleisle who, with imploring gesticulations, made appeals to their pity. The Indians looked at each other wonder-

ingly, and as it were, in rapid consultation, when one of them beckoned to Belleisle, inviting him to approach the fire and partake of their fare. There they remained encamped until he could walk, and then they took him to their village, where he was kept in a state of servitude during eighteen months. He swept the cabins of his masters, cleaned their weapons, planted their corn, cooked their victuals, and performed all the other services of a menial. A severe trial he had of it—the half-starved drudge!—the overtasked hewer of wood and drawer of water to barbarian tyrants! At last an Indian of the tribe where he was held in captivity, stole from him a small tin box which his masters had permitted him to retain, and which contained his commission as an officer, and other papers. The thief sold the box to a member of the Assinais tribe. These Indians lived in Texas, not far from the French settlement of Natchitoches, with which they had frequent intercourse. The new owner of the box, thinking that it might be valuable to his white neighbors, and that he might sell it to them with advantage, carried it to that market, where, of course, it attracted attention, and was exhibited to St. Denis, the commander of Natchitoches. It gave rise to inquiry, and St. Denis, being informed of the melancholy situation of one of his countrymen, dispatched some Indians to treat for the ransom of Belleisle, who was safely conducted by them to Natchitoches.

Such were all the remarkable events which occurred in 1721.

In the year 1722, on the 12th of March, the company issued an ordinance which prohibited the inhabitants of Louisiana from selling their negroes, for transportation out of the colony, to the Spaniards, or to any other subjects of a foreign nation, under the penalty

of a fine of one thousand livres and confiscation of the negroes.

On the 20th of April, Bienville wrote from Fort St. Louis at Mobile, to the French government, an interesting communication on the difficulties attending the unloading of vessels on the shores of Biloxi, on account of the shallowness of the water; which difficulties he represented as not existing in the Mississippi. "I have had the honor," said he, "to send to the council in my last letter detailed information on the mouths of the Mississippi, and to give the assurance that vessels not drawing more than thirteen feet water could go over the bar with all sail set, without risk of stranding. It would not be difficult to render the pass practicable for larger ships, because the bottom consists of soft and moving mud. I would have already done so, if the engineers who are intrusted with the execution of the public works had shared my opinion. But their attention is engrossed by the improvements which have been attempted at Biloxi, and which I think will have to be abandoned. Should the company persist in sending their vessels to Biloxi, it will materially retard the progress of the colony, and will expose us to considerable expenses. The vessels are forced to stop at Ship Island, which is fifteen miles from the main land where our settlement is situated. To unload these vessels, we are obliged to send to Ship Island packet-boats, which, in their turn, can not approach Biloxi nearer than two miles and a half. Then, other small boats are sent to unload the packet-boats, and these boats, small as they are, strand at a distance of carbine-shot from the shore. This statement of facts ought to be sufficient to convince the council of the importance of ordering all vessels coming from France to enter the Mississippi, where they would discharge their cargoes in two

days. I assumed the responsibility of sending thither two *flutes* (small vessels), which crossed the bar with all sails set. I would have done the same with the other vessels, which have just arrived, if we had not received the precise order of unloading them at Biloxi."

It is really astonishing that, in spite of the judicious and self-evident representations of Bienville, backed by the physical structure of the country, the French government should have so obstinately and for so many years clung to the bleak and worthless shores of Biloxi, as the chief settlement of Louisiana, and its most important commercial emporium. But there is very little common sense to be discovered in the administration of most colonies by the mother country, and particularly in that of Louisiana under the French domination.

On the 20th of May, it was decreed that there should be in the Superior Council, five councilors instead of four, and those councilors were, Bruslé, Fazende, Perry, Guilhet and Masclary.

On the 4th of June, a vessel of the company arrived with another band of two hundred and fifty Germans, commanded by the Chevalier d'Arensbourg, a Swedish officer, who had so distinguished himself at the battle of Pultawa, that he had been presented by Charles the XIIth with a sword, which is still in the hands of his descendants in Louisiana. This vessel brought back to the colony Marigny de Mandeville, who, in 1709, it will be remembered, had joined in the systematic opposition made to Bienville by the commissary La Salle and the Curate de la Vente. Marigny had obtained in France the cross of St. Louis and the command of Fort Condé at Mobile.

With this vessel came the confirmation of the utter discomfiture of Law, and of the ruin and desolation which his plans and banking operations had generated

in France. It produced a great sensation in the colony, because the inhabitants were afraid of being left to their own resources, and of being lost sight of, on account of the general distress which reigned in France, and which was sufficient to absorb all the attention and resources of the government. Their apprehensions, however, were not immediately realized to the extent which they anticipated, and they continued, through part of the year, to receive some further supplies and assistance. On the 15th of July, Duvergier, who had been appointed *directeur ordonnateur et commandant de la marine*, landed at Pensacola, bearing crosses of St. Louis to Boisbriant, to St. Denis, and to Chateaugué, who, it will be remembered, had been made prisoner at Pensacola by the Spaniards, when they retook that place, and who had lately been exchanged.

Although, as it has been shown in the course of these lectures, many importations of females had been made, the want of them continued to be sensibly felt, and to be a subject of complaint on the part of the colonists. As a specimen of the tone and manners of the time, I think it is not out of place to record here an extract from a letter addressed on that subject to one of the king's ministers in France, by one M. de Chassin. It bears a stamp of originality which is quite characteristic. "You see, my Lord," said he, "that to assure the solidity of our establishment in Louisiana, there is but one thing wanting—a sufficient number of women. However, woman is a piece of furniture which many repent of having introduced into their household, and without which I shall contrive to get along until, as I have had already the honor to inform you, the company shall think proper to send us girls having at least some appearance of virtue. If, by chance, there should be among your female acquaintances one disposed to

risk the voyage for my sake, I should certainly be greatly under her obligation, and would most assuredly do my best to give her proofs of my gratitude."

This M. de Chassin, who presumed to write in such a style of familiarity to one of the king's ministers, has left no other trace of his passage in Louisiana than this jocose application for a wife. It is likely, from his name, from the lightness of his tone, and from the perfect ease with which he addresses one of the great dignitaries of the kingdom, that he was a scion of nobility, who had been invited to travel to, and to stay in Louisiana, until his morals or his purse should have recovered from the effect of the commission of youthful follies.

Toward the close of the year, the supplies which used to be sent from France became more scanty on account of the disorderly state into which the affairs of the company were falling. Famine made again its appearance in the colony, as it had frequently done before, and it became necessary, from the want of provisions, to quarter some of the troops, in small squads, among the Indians, and to scatter the rest on the banks of rivers, where they lived as they could, on fish and game. Twenty-six soldiers who constituted the garrison of Fort Toulouse among the Alibamons, being reduced to very short allowance, and suffering too acutely and too long from their wants, butchered their captain, Marchand, and with their arms and baggage departed for South Carolina. Villemont, their lieutenant, who, when the murder of Marchand took place at the fort, happened to be absent, and whose life was saved by that circumstance, on hearing of what had occurred, made an appeal to the Indians as friends of his government, and persuaded them to pursue with him the rebellious deserters. They soon overtook the fugitives,

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who, knowing the fate they had to expect if they surrendered, fought with desperation, and were killed almost to a man.

Fortunately, toward the latter part of September, the colony was relieved by the arrival of a vessel well stocked with provisions and ammunition. It brought the information that the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France, had intrusted the direction of the affairs of the company to three Commissaries, Ferrand, Faget and Machinet.

The distress of the colony was increased by a hurricane which produced the most extensive damage, and De l'Orme, one of the principal agents of the company, who, in a letter of the 30th of October, renders an account of the effects of that hurricane, speaks of continual desertions among the soldiers, mechanics and sailors, and recommends, as a remedy to the demoralizing influence of such derelictions of duty, to allow, in all the vessels of the company, free passage to those persons who might be disposed to return to France.

The paper currency of the colony had been reduced to such a state of discredit, that it had ceased to pass and to answer its purposes. Hence a complete cessation of business. It was necessary to meet that evil, and the company had recourse to a process which was not deficient in ingeniousness, whatever may be said of its want of good faith. The paper currency to which I allude, consisted in notes signed and issued by the directors of the company in France, or by its commanders, officers, or chief agents in the colony. It was decreed that all these *notes* should be converted into *cards*, to which some fair promises and additional privileges were attached to give them value, and that all the notes which should not be presented at certain places to certain agents, and within a time remarkably short, to be



converted into *cards*, as desired, should become null and void in the hands of the bearers. These notes being scattered through an immense extent of country, many could not be brought back, partly through want of time and partly through carelessness or indifference, and became thereby extinct according to the decree. In this way a considerable portion of the company's debt was liquidated at once.

Sheep, mild as they are, will bleat obstreperously when they are sheared too close by the shepherd; and the inhabitants of Louisiana, following this example, complained so loudly that, by an ordinance issued on the 28th of December, they were authorized to send an agent with full powers who would advocate and defend their interests before the Council of State, by which the affairs of the company were to be taken into consideration and adjudicated upon. On the 8th of the same month, the Council of State had dispatched Saunoy and de la Chaise to Louisiana, to force the agents of the company to render an account of the merchandise sent by the company, and of the goods which had been delivered to those agents by the clerks of Crozat, when the company was substituted for him in the government of the province. They were instructed to depart with the utmost secrecy and speed, to show their powers to the Superior Council on their arrival in Louisiana, then immediately to repair to the company's warehouses, to take possession of them, and to put the seals on all the papers of the agents.

Thus it is seen that the situation of affairs was gloomy enough. To make it worse, the Natchez recommenced war against the French. They murdered three of their traders, and attacked the *Kolly Plantation*, which was situated in the neighborhood of their villages, and

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where they killed a man and destroyed a considerable number of cattle.

The three commissaries, Faget, Machinet, and Fer-rand, who had been selected by the Regent to assume the direction of the affairs of the company, had certainly been appointed to no sinecure. They had to cope with the discouragements of the colonists, who were constantly attempting to run away from their miseries—with the desertion, the insubordination, and rebellious disposition of the troops—with a depreciated paper currency, heavy debts, hurricanes, and other calamities—with unfaithful and roguish agents—with the spirit of discord, which had always existed among the officers of the colony;—and now, in addition to these numerous perplexities, they were threatened with a war from the Natchez.

The three new commissaries who had assumed the direction of the affairs of the company, of which they were now the sole administrators, sanctioned the execution of two projects which, for a long while, had been favorite conceptions with Bienville, but which he had never been permitted to carry into operation. He was authorized to transfer the seat of government to New Orleans, and to make at the Arkansas a settlement, the chief object of which was to establish a connecting point between the Illinois and the lower part of the colony, and to facilitate the introduction of horses, mules, and cattle from the Spanish provinces. Bienville, as soon as he received the desired authority, ordered La Harpe, with a detachment of sixteen men, to ascend the Arkansas River as far up as possible, to make an accurate survey of the country, to look for mines, and to inform the Spaniards he might meet, that all the territory watered by the Arkansas River, from its source down

to its mouth, was regarded by France as belonging to her, in consequence of the possession taken of it by La Salle when he descended the Mississippi.

Thus closed the year 1722.

## THIRD LECTURE.

ORIGIN, CUSTOMS, MANNERS, TRADITIONS, AND LAWS OF THE NATCHEZ—DECLINE OF THAT TRIBE—NUMBER AND POWER OF THE CHOCTAWS AND CHICKASAWS.

THE soil of the colony of Louisiana had been, from time immemorial, tenanted by an infinite number of small insignificant Indian tribes, the mere recapitulation of which would uselessly occupy more than one page. Suffice it to say, that they had a very similar appearance, like twins fresh from the womb of nature. There were, it is true, some differences in their dialects—some varieties in their customs, laws, and manners—merging, however, in the same uniformity of savage existence and of confirmed barbarism. In the dark twilight of uncivilized ignorance in which they lived, the distinctive shades existing between their moral, intellectual, and physical features were hardly perceptible, and are certainly not of sufficient importance to attract the notice and to call for the investigation of the historian. *De minimis non curat historia.* But an exception is to be made in favor of the three most important nations of that country, on account of their numbers, of their power, and of the considerable and direct influence which they exercised over the destinies of the colony. These nations are the Natchez, the Choctaws, and the Chickasaws.

In 1722, the Natchez could bring into the field six hundred warriors. The time, however, was not far dis-

tant, when they could have set on foot four thousand able-bodied men. But from different causes acting with frightful rapidity, their population had been dwindling away, and they seemed to be incompetent to arrest the gradual destruction of their race. If vague and indistinct tradition is to be believed, the cradle of the Natchez nation was *somewhere near the sun*, whence they came to Mexico; which country was their resting-place for some centuries. But they were probably driven from it in consequence of civil wars in which they were defeated. Some of the depositaries of their legendary lore even said, that their nation had been one of those that aided Cortez in overthrowing the empire of Montezuma. But soon perceiving that the Spaniards were disposed to exercise over them a tyranny worse than the one from which they had sought to escape by breaking the power of the great Aztec emperor to whom they were subjected, they determined to seek another clime, where they might enjoy in peace and in perfect freedom their ancient nationality. They followed the rising sun from east to west, and came to those beautiful hills in Louisiana, which they selected for their new home. In those days, the country which they occupied extended from Manchac to Wabash, and they could boast of five hundred Suns, or members of the royal family. Now, in 1722, they were confined to a contracted territory and to a few villages, the principal of which was situated three miles from Fort Rosalie, on a small water-course, at the distance of about two miles and a half from the Mississippi. The other villages were within a short distance of the principal one, where resided the sovereign.

Their government was a perfect Asiatic despotism. Their sovereign was styled the *Great Sun*, and on his death, it was customary to immolate in his honor a con-

siderable number of his subjects. The subordinate chiefs of the royal blood were called *Little Suns*, and when they also paid the inevitable tribute due to nature, there was, according to their dignity and the estimation they were held in, a proportionate and voluntary sacrifice of lives. The poor ignorant barbarians who thus died for their princes, did it cheerfully, because they were persuaded that, by escorting them to the world of spirits, they would, in recompense for their devotion, be entitled to live in eternal youth and bliss, suffering neither from cold, nor from heat, hunger, thirst, or disease, and rioting in the full gratification of all their tastes, desires, and passions. These frequent hecatombs of human beings were one of the causes, it is said, which contributed to a rapid diminution of that race. But as this sanguinary custom appears to have been very ancient, and almost coeval with their formation into national existence, how is it that they should ever have swelled up to be such a powerful and numerous tribe as they are represented to have been at one time? It is alledged that the other causes of destruction were,—a state of constant warfare, the prevalence of affections of the chest or lungs in the winter, and the invasion of the small-pox.

The Natchez were of a light mahogany complexion, with jet-black hair and eyes. Their features were extremely regular, and their expression was intelligent, open and noble. They were tall in stature, very few of them being under six feet, and the symmetry of their well-proportioned limbs was remarkable. The smallest Natchez that was ever seen by the French was five feet in height: considering himself a dwarf, and, therefore, an object of contumely, he always kept himself concealed. Their whole frame presented a beautiful development of the muscles, and men were not seen

among them, either overloaded with flesh, or almost completely deprived of this necessary appendage to the human body—no bloated, fat-bellied lump of mortality contrasting in bold relief with a thin and lank would-be representative of a man. The sight was never afflicted by the appearance of a hunchback or some other equally distorted wretch, such as are so often observed among the European race. In common with all the aborigines of Louisiana, they were flat-headed—which was a peculiar shape they liked, and into which they took care to mold the skulls of their offspring when in their infancy. The women were not as good-looking as the men, and were generally of the middle size. The inferiority of the female sex to the male, with regard to the beauty of personal appearance, is a remarkable fact among all the Indian tribes, and is, no doubt, to be attributed to the state of degradation in which their women are kept, and to the painful labors to which they are subjected.

The Natchez had shown a good deal of acute invention in providing themselves with all the implements necessary to their wants. To cut down timber, they had flint axes ingeniously contrived, and to sever flesh, either raw or cooked, they had knives made up of a peculiar kind of keen-edged reed, called *conchac*. They used for their bows the Acacia wood, and their bow-strings were made either with the barks of trees, or the skins of animals. Their arrows, made of reed, were winged with the feathers of birds, and when destined to kill buffaloes, or deer, their points were armed with sharp pieces of bone, and particularly of fish-bone. The Natchez understood the art of dressing, or preparing buffalo, deer and beaver skins, and those of other animals, so as to provide themselves with very comfortable clothing for the winter, and they used, as awls for sewing, small thin bones, which they took from the legs of

herons. Their huts were made of rude materials, such as rough timber and a combination of mud, sand, and Spanish moss worked together into a solid sort of mortar and forming their walls, to which they gave a thickness of four inches. The roofs were of intermingled grass and reeds, so skillfully put together, that these roofs would last twenty years without leaking. The huts were square, and usually measured fifteen feet by fifteen;—some, however, such as those of the chiefs, had thirty feet square, and even more. They had no other aperture, for egress or ingress, or for admitting light, than a door which generally was two feet wide by four in height. The frames of the beds of the Natchez, which rose two feet from the floor, were of wood, but the inside was a soft and elastic texture of plaited or weaved up reeds: and those unsophisticated sons of nature had, to rest during the day, nothing but hard and low wooden seats, with no backs to lean against.

Their agriculture, before they became acquainted with the French, who taught them the use of wheat and flour, was limited to the cultivation of corn, which they knew how to grind with a wooden apparatus. Their women had arrived at considerable proficiency in the manufacturing of earthenware, and they made all sorts of pots, pitchers, bottles, bowls, dishes and plates bearing designs, among which it is pretended that Grecian letters and Hebrew characters are plainly to be discovered. Their crockery was generally of a reddish color. They also excelled in making sieves, bottles, and winnowing fans. With the bark of the linden or lime-tree, they made very beautiful nets to catch birds or fish. They knew how to dye skins in several colors, of which those they liked best were the white, the yellow, the red, and the black, and their taste was to use them in alternate stripes. The skins thus dyed, particularly

that of the porcupine, they embroidered with considerable art, and the drawings were somewhat of a gothic character. They also made bed-coverings and cloaks with the bark of the mulberry-tree, and with the feathers of turkeys, ducks, and geese. Like the other Indians, the Natchez had not carried very far the science of navigation, and to cross rivers, they had imagined to scoop the trunks of trees, which they shaped into canoes. Some of their largest canoes measured forty feet in length by four in width: they were generally made to carry twelve persons, and were exceedingly light. These boats were propelled by the means of paddles six feet long.

During the summer, men and women were always half naked and bare-footed, except when traveling. Then they would wear shoes made of the skin of deer. For ornaments, they wore rings or painted bones through their ears and noses, and in the shape of bracelets round their arms and legs. They were also very fond of painted glass-beads, which they interwove in their hair, or carried round their necks in the shape of collars, to which they added the teeth of alligators, or the claws of wild beasts. These same painted glass-beads they also used in ornamenting their leather garments, and they composed with them fanciful embroideries. The vermilion with which they painted their bodies was one of their favorite embellishments, together with the hieroglyphic figures, or crude heraldic devices, with which they used to impregnate their skins from head to foot. On being made acquainted with those small bells with which mules are decorated, they became very fond of having them about their persons in as great profusion as they could, and were delighted with the merry ringing which attended the slightest of their motions. They shaved the back part of their heads in the man-



ner practiced by the religious orders among the Roman Catholics, leaving in the midst of the crown five or six locks of hair, wherewith to tie feathers. The rest of the hair was clipped round, friar-like, with the exception of a long twisted tuft which was left dangling down on the left shoulder, and at the extremity of which feathers were fastened on feast days. The sovereign wore round the head a net-work of black thread, to which adhered a diadem of white feathers eight inches in height on the forehead, and dwindling down to four behind. It was surmounted by a tuft of fur, out of which shot up a small crest of horse-hair, one inch and a half in height, and painted red :—it had a picturesque effect.

As soon as a child was born, the mother rose up, and going to the next stream, washed it thoroughly. Then she came back to her hut, and placed the child in its cradle, which was usually two feet and a half long, by eight or nine inches in width, and six inches in height. This cradle made of reeds was very light, hardly weighing two pounds, and was always placed on the very bed of the mother, so that she might conveniently nurse her child. The motion of the cradle was not sideways, as of those used by Europeans, and which must produce the unpleasant sensation experienced in a ship rolling at sea, but forward and backward like one of our modern rocking-chairs. The most watchful maternal care was bestowed upon the children, who were never allowed to stand on their legs before they were strong enough to make the attempt without too much effort, and they were allowed free access to their milk diet from the parental breast as long as they pleased, unless the mother's health, or her peculiar situation, should have prevented its continuance. Every day, they were rubbed with oil, to render their limbs

more flexible, and to prevent the bites of flies or mosquitoes.

When boys reached their twelfth year, they were committed to the charge of the oldest man of their respective families, who was called "*the Ancient*." He undertook to superintend their education, and to impart to them all necessary knowledge and desired qualifications. Under his tuition, they learned to swim, to run, to jump, to wrestle, and to practice with the bow or other weapons, and they received from his lips those moral lessons or precepts which were to regulate their behavior, when they should be grown into manhood. A bunch of hay, as big as the fist, was generally put at the top of a stick, as a target at which they shot with their arrows. The most successful carried the prize, and received the praise which the *ancient* usually awarded him: and as a pre-eminent distinction, he was styled *the Young Warrior*. The next one in skill was called the *Apprentice Warrior*. It is to be remarked that blows were never given to boys as a corrective, but only moral means were resorted to, and appeals were made to their feelings of pride or of shame. The most profound respect was paid to the oldest member of every family—to the *ancient*, whose decisions were supreme, and received with the most implicit obedience. Thus the head of a family was called *father* by all its members, however distant their blood relations might have been to him: and whenever these Indians meant to speak of him from whom they really derived their existence, they used to say, *my true father*, in contradistinction to the word *father* applied to the chief of the family. In old times, a similar respect was paid by our Caucasian race to the experience and dignity of age, but now it is a custom, the breach of which is much more faithfully adhered to than the observance.

When three years old, the children of both sexes were every morning, summer or winter, taken to some stream to bathe in, and in this way they learned how to swim, and at the same time they fortified their bodies so as to endure with ease the hardships to which they would be exposed in the course of their lives. But as it is the case with all the Indians of North America, the men were educated to be only warriors and hunters, and the women to do all the work and drudgery which were necessary for the comfort of their own existence and that of the lordly sex which kept them sunk down to a state of profound inferiority. In one thing, however, they were superior to more civilized nations—quarrels and fights were exceedingly rare among them. The penalty for such transgressions was to live for a certain time in utter seclusion, apart from the rest of the tribe, the culprits being considered as having forfeited their character, and as being unworthy of associating with decent and respectable people. The fear of the infliction of such a disgrace had always proved to be a very effective preventive. In fact, the education which the Natchez received made them so cautious of trespassing on each other's rights, that the few penal laws which existed among them had seldom to be enforced.

As they were ignorant of the art of writing, their history consisted in tradition handed down from one generation to another; but in order to secure to it as much authenticity as possible, a certain number of their most intelligent, discreet, and trustworthy young men were selected to be educated in the knowledge of their traditional lore, which they were taught and sworn to respect as sacred, to preserve with religious fidelity, and to transmit in their turn to their successors, with exact minuteness. They were called *the repositories of the voice of the past, of the ancient word*; and from time to

time they were requested to recite before the old men of the nation what had been deposited, and was to be treasured up in their memory, in order that it might be ascertained whether they would make themselves guilty either of omissions arising from design, oblivion, indifference, and carelessness, or of additions and interpolations proceeding from the exuberance of fancy, or from the pruriency of invention. This shows a respect for historical truth which can not be too highly commended, and which ought to be set up as an example deserving of imitation by our modern recorders of events.

The Natchez had two languages ;—which peculiarity existed also among the Peruvians. One was called the *vulgar*, that is, the dialect reserved for the common people, who were permitted to speak no other. The other one was used altogether by the nobles and by the women. Both these languages were said to be very rich, and had no affinity to each other. For instance, he who would have wished to bespeak the attention of a plebeian, would have said “*aquenau*,” *listen*, and to a noble, “*magani*,” which has exactly the same meaning ; to a plebeian, “*tachte cabanacte*,” *is it thou ?* and to a noble, “*apape-gouya-iche* ;” to a plebeian, “*petchi*,” *sit down*, and to a noble, “*caham*.” In the language of the vulgar, “*coustine*” signified *spirit*, and “*tchite*” meant *great*. In the language of the nobles, the word “*coyocop*” meant *spirit*, and “*cliquip*” *great*. These examples are sufficient to show the want of analogy which existed between these two languages. The women, as I have already said, spoke the language of the nobles, but with an affected and quaint pronunciation, totally different from that of the men. The French, who associated more with the women than with the other sex, had taken their pronunciation ; which cir-


cumstance provoked a rebuke addressed to one of them by a Natchez magnate: "Since thou hast the pretension to be a man," said the chief to the Frenchman, "why dost thou lisp like a woman?"

The Natchez believed in a Supreme Creator of the universe, and they designated him by the name of Coyocop chile, which meant, *Coyocop, spirit; chile, infinitely great*. They thought that, as they expressed it, "*all they saw, all they might see, and all they were not able to see*," proceeded from him—that he was so good and kind that he could not do harm if he wished; that mere conception and volition on his part had been sufficient to generate every thing; that there were however subordinate spirits, called *Coyocop techou*, who were perpetually standing in his presence, and implicitly obeying his mandates like slaves; that every thing which was bad and calamitous in this world was produced by evil spirits as invisible as the air in which they lived; that these evil spirits formerly had a chief who worked so much mischief, that the Great Spirit had chained him in a dark cell, since which time the evil spirits, his subjects, were not so constantly bent upon doing injury, particularly when they were softened by respectful prayers. Whenever the Natchez wished for rain or fair weather, they had recourse to fasting, and frequently on such occasions their sovereign, the Great Sun, would, during nine consecutive days, abstain from meat and fish, and live altogether on a little boiled corn. He would also take particular care, during all that time, to have no intercourse of any kind with his wives. The Natchez believed in a deluge which had destroyed mankind with the exception of a few people, who had taken refuge on a high mountain, and who had repopled the earth.

According to the religious creed of the Natchez, the

Great Spirit had molded the first man out of the same kind of clay with which they made their crockery, and being satisfied with his work, had breathed life into it. As to woman, they did not know exactly how she had been created. There were various traditions on this subject. One of them reported, that a short time after the first man was gifted with existence, he was taken with a violent fit of sneezing, when something in the shape of a woman, as big as the thumb, bolted from his nose, and on falling on the ground, kept on dancing with extreme velocity until it grew into the present size of the female sex.

Many centuries before the Natchez came to the banks of the Mississippi, they were living in a condition of almost brutish ignorance, when there appeared among them a man and a woman who had descended from the sun. They were clothed all over with light, and looked so dazzlingly bright that no human eye could long dwell upon their forms. This man told them that from the realms of the sun he had seen that they were the miserable victims of anarchy, because they had no master, and did not know how to govern themselves, while every one of them, although incapable of self-government, thought that he was competent to rule over the rest of his race. Wherefore, he had taken the determination to come down upon earth to teach the Natchez how to live. His moral precepts were few in number, and suited to the circumstances of the people he intended to legislate for. The most important ones were, not to kill any human being except in self-defense; to be satisfied with the possession of one's own wife, and not to covet that of any other man; never to tell a lie; never to be inebriated; and never to take the property of another. He also strongly recommended generosity,



charity, and the distribution of one's goods among the destitute.

This man spoke with such authority that he produced the deepest impression on the Natchez. While he was reposing with his wife in the hut to which they had conducted him, the old men of that nation met in a solemn conclave in the dead of the night, and the next morning they went in great ceremony to the wonderful stranger to propose to him to be their sovereign. He refused at first, saying, he knew he would not be obeyed, and that, much to his regret, this want of obedience would be death to all the Natchez. But yielding at last to repeated solicitations, he accepted on the following conditions: that the Natchez would emigrate to a better country, which he would point out to them; that they would live strictly according to the laws to be established by him, and that their sovereigns would forever be of his race. "If I have," said he, "any male and female issue, there shall be no intermarriage among them, they being brothers and sisters. But they shall be permitted to wed from the bulk of the people. The first-born of my sons shall be my successor, and then the son of his eldest daughter, or in case he should have no daughter, the son of his eldest sister, or in his default, the eldest son of the nearest female relation of the sovereign, and so on in perpetuity."

Then he went into the minutest details concerning the laws of succession to the throne, and provided for all possible contingencies. He called down fire from the sun, and ordered that it should be eternally kept up with walnut wood, stripped of its bark, in two temples, to be built at the two farthest extremities of the country to be occupied by the Natchez. According to his instructions, a body of eight men was selected out of the nation as ministers or priests for each temple.



Their duty was to watch in turn the sacred fire, and on its being extinguished, the guardian then on the watch was to be punished with death. The mysterious law-giver that had come from the sun, predicted the most awful calamities to the Natchez, if the sacred fire was ever allowed to go out entirely in both temples. Should it be extinguished in one, the guardians were to relight it by hurrying to the other temple. But they were not to be allowed to borrow the sacred fire peaceably. They were to fight for the holy spark, and were not to carry it away before shedding blood in the contest, on the floor of the temple, as a sort of propitiatory offering to the evil spirits.

Implicit obedience was sworn to all the mandatory dispositions of the new sovereign, and he signified that he wished to be called "*thé*," which meant "*thee*." He lived to very old age, saw the children of his grandchildren, and was the author of all the institutions which prevailed among the Natchez, until that nation was destroyed. He certainly was, in the most emphatic sense of the word, their supreme legislator, their Lycurgus. After his death his children were called *suns*, on account of their origin. He established no sacrifices, no libations, no offerings. The only worship which he prescribed, if it can be so called, was the keeping of the sacred fire, and one of the first duties of the Great Sun was to watch over the strict fulfillment of this charge, and to visit one of the temples every day for this purpose.

The Natchez had great national festivals, which partook of a religious and political character. These festivals were religious in one sense, as being instituted with the object of returning thanks to the Creator for his manifold benefits; and they were also essentially of a political nature, as they were the only sources of the revenue of



the sovereign ; because, although despotic in his authority, and the absolute master of the lives and property of his subjects, he never imposed taxation nor levied contribution, and he remained satisfied with the presents which were made to him on these great festivals.

For the Natchez, the year opened in March, and was divided into thirteen moons. The thirteenth moon was added to make the course of that planet correspond with that of the sun, and to complete the year. On every new moon a great feast was celebrated, and took its name from the fruits which had been gathered, from the game which had been pursued, or from the usual occupations of the people during the preceding moon. Thus, the year began in March with the celebration of the *moon of the deer*. It was the most joyous and the most important celebration. There was rehearsed a sort of dramatic performance, recalling the memory of an historical event which had left a deep impression upon the Natchez.

In days of old, a Great Sun, having heard the uproar of a sudden tumult in his village, issued precipitately from his dwelling, to appease what he supposed to be a quarrel among his people, and fell into the hands of a hostile nation, by which his capital had been surprised. But the Natchez recovering from their astonishment and dismay, came in time to the rescue, delivered their sovereign, and put to flight their enemies with immense slaughter. In commemoration of this honorable event in their history, their warriors, at the beginning of every year, in the *moon of the deer*, would divide themselves into two bodies, made distinct by the colors of their feathers. Those who represented the Natchez, wore white feathers, and those who acted the enemy, sported red feathers. Both these troops put themselves in ambuscade near the residence of the sovereign. The

enemies, commanded by the *Great Chief of the Warriors*, who was always the most distinguished general of the tribe, some such thing as an Alexander, a Cæsar, a Bonaparte, or a Wellington, were the first to issue from their place of concealment, and approached with slow steps the house of the *Great Sun*, but shouting all the while to the full top of their voices, and distorting their bodies into every sort of fantastic contortions. Then the *Great Sun* came out full dressed, but rubbing his eyes as if just awaking. The foes, shouting their death-cry, threw themselves upon him and carried him away.

In their turn, the Natchez came rushing on, and encountered their enemies with terrific howls and shrieks, making an appalling compound of all the tones and exclamations expressive of fear, anger, despair and revenge. Then followed, during half an hour, a scene of mimic warfare, in which both parties displayed all the stratagems they could invent, and all the military skill they possessed. During all that time, prodigies of valor were performed by the *Great Sun*, who stoutly defended himself with a wooden tomahawk. The enemies by whom he was enveloped, fell in heaps under his simulated blows, and strewed the ground with their corpses. At last, the Natchez succeeded in routing the hostile warriors, whom they pursued to a considerable distance; and delighted with such a complete and glorious victory, they returned to their village, bearing aloft in triumph their sovereign, making the welkin ring with their joyous shouts, which were merrily responded to by the echoes of their hills. The old men, the women and children came forward to meet the returning host, and joined with noisy demonstrations in the general jubilation. The French writers report that the spectacle of this mimic battle was exceedingly in-

teresting, and that it was so true to nature in all its incidents, and produced such a complete illusion, that no one could witness it without the liveliest excitement.

The *Great Sun*, being escorted back to his dwelling, retired to rest, and while he was reposing, his subjects, who feigned to be ignorant whether he was wounded or not, rambled about the village, uttering groans and plaintive sighs. After the lapse of about half an hour, the Great Sun came out, bareheaded, and without his crown. He was joyfully and respectfully saluted with shouts and every demonstration of enthusiastic greeting. But profound silence ensued among the people, when they saw their sovereign advancing in the direction of the temple. When in front of the edifice, he bowed with profound reverence, as if in adoration. Then he gathered dust, which he threw back over his head, and turned successively to the four quarters of the world in repeating the same act of throwing dust. After this, he looked fixedly at the temple, extended both his arms horizontally, as motionless as a statue, and praying all the while. His subjects observed the deepest silence while this was going on; and on his returning to his house, the groans of the people recommenced, and ceased only when he reappeared with the royal diadem round his temples. Then, his throne, which was a stool four feet high, decorated with curious devices, and covered with a fancifully painted skin, was brought before his door. On his taking his seat, his warriors threw over his shoulders a choice buffalo hide, and under his feet a carpet of costly furs. The rest of his subjects and the women presented him also with various offerings, according to their means. This was the first tribute of the year paid to the sovereign.

When this ceremony was over, the princes of the royal blood, called the *Little Suns*, entered the palace

with the *Great Sun*. On this occasion, if there were strangers of distinction in the village, they were invited to dine with the sovereign. In the evening, dances were executed round the royal dwelling, which was built on an artificial mound, measuring eight feet in height by sixty feet square.

The second moon, which corresponded with our month of April, was called the *moon of strawberries*. The women and children gathered a considerable quantity of this fruit, and did not fail to present to the *Great Sun* his full share of the harvest. On that occasion, the warriors tendered him a liberal offering of wild ducks, which were smoked for preservation. This was the second tribute.

The third moon, in the month of May, was called the *moon of old corn*, in which they feasted on the balance of corn remaining from the preceding year, after having paid to their sovereign what they considered his due. This was the third tribute.

The fourth moon, or June, was called the *moon of water-melons*. To the Great Sun was offered a large supply of this fruit, and of fish caught in the Mississippi, and carefully pickled. This was the fourth tribute.

The fifth moon, or the month of July, was called the *moon of peaches*. Then, the sovereign received his provision of wild grapes and peaches. It was his fifth tribute.

The sixth moon, or the month of August, was called the *moon of blackberries*. Full baskets of this fruit were laid before the Great Sun, and he was abundantly supplied with every kind of domestic fowl. It was the sixth tribute. Every one of those moons was attended with feastings and rejoicings.

The seventh moon, or the month of September, was

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the *moon of new corn*, the celebration of which consisted in eating in common, with certain religious ceremonies, a quantity of corn which had been planted and cultivated to that effect. To plant that corn, a space of uncleared, virgin land was selected and prepared for cultivation by the warriors, who used fire to kill the trees, and to remove the grass, furz, canes, or other vegetable rubbish which might encumber the ground. On the land being ready, the corn had to be planted by the warriors, under the command of the *war-chief*. None were allowed to work in the sacred field but the warriors, and it would have amounted to profanation, deserving of death, for any other person to join in that labor. When this corn began to ripen, the warriors chose a well-shaded spot, where they constructed a barn in the shape of a large round tower. They called it "Momo ataop," which signified, *barn of value*. When the barn was filled up with the new corn, the sovereign was informed of that fact, and fixed the day on which, in his presence, it was to be eaten in common. Then, temporary huts, made for the occasion, with the lopped off branches of trees, with sweet-smelling grass, fresh leaves, and green moss, were erected for the Great Sun, and all his people, to protect them against the inclemencies of the weather, during the feast, which always lasted several days. At dawn, on the day appointed, all the old men and the adults, the women and children, departed with the necessary utensils, to make the required preparations. The war-chief placed sixteen warriors, among whom were eight veterans, at the door of the sovereign, and eight others at regular intervals of one hundred paces each, from the royal dwelling to the place of rendezvous. Their duty was to act as sedan-bearers to the Great Sun. After making these dispositions, the war-chief went to the meeting-place, where,

putting himself at the head of the rest of the warriors, he patiently waited for the arrival of the sovereign.

Now, the royal sedan is at the door of the palace. Its four arms are painted red, and its body is richly decorated with fancifully painted and embroidered deer-skins, with leaves of the magnolia, and with garlands of white and red flowers. Out comes the sovereign in full dress, and with all the marks of his dignity. The sixteen warriors, stationed at his door, utter successive shouts as loud as human lungs will allow. The eight warriors who are placed at a distance of one hundred steps, repeat these shouts with the same vehemence, which shouts are almost instantaneously transmitted from throats to throats to the place where the people are congregated, and where they are informed in this way of the coming of their sovereign. On his issuing from his door, the eight old veterans lift him up into the sedan supported by the eight other warriors, who depart with him full speed, and run as fast as they can. At every hundred steps, the sovereign finds a fresh relay of eight men, and travels with the greatest rapidity, followed by those who have successively borne him, and who utter deafening shouts, which are nothing, however, to those bellowed forth, when he appears in sight of the whole nation assembled. He is first carried in triumph round the barn, which he salutes respectfully with three howls, to which the people respond with nine distinct and measured howls. Then he ascends his throne, and familiarly converses with his nobles. During that time, what is called *new fire*, is made by rubbing two sticks together. Every other kind of fire would be looked upon as profane. When all is ready, the *war-chief* presents himself before the throne of the Great Sun, and says to him, "Speak—I wait for thy command." Then the Great Sun rises,

bows reverentially to the four quarters of the world, beginning with the East. He next raises his hands and eyes toward heaven and says, "Let the corn be distributed." The war-chief thanks him with one prolonged howl, the princes and princesses with three howls, and the common people with nine, with the exception of the women and children, who observe a profound silence.

After a certain lapse of time, when it is supposed that the repast is prepared, the *word-bearer*, or *chancellor* of the Great Sun, says to the master of ceremonies: "See if the victuals are properly cooked." Then, two dishes of corn are brought to the Great Sun, who goes out of his hut, presents them to the four quarters of the world, and sending one of them to the war-chief, says, *Pachcou, eat*,—a command which his subjects joyfully and eagerly obey. The warriors eat first, then the young men and boys, and next, the women and young girls. When the warriors have done, they form themselves into two opposite bands, occupying two sides of a square fitted up for the occasion, and they sing with alternate choruses during about half an hour. Those songs are always of a warlike character. The war-chief puts an end to that concert, by striking with his tomahawk the red post which is erected in the midst of the square, and which is called the *Warrior's post*. Then begins what may be called the *declamation scene*, which is opened by the war-chief. With an emphatic tone he relates his exploits, and boasts of the number of foes he has killed. He concludes by making an appeal to the bystanders in confirmation of the truth of his assertions, to which they assent with a loud *ubulatus* or howl. All the warriors follow the example of their chief, according to their rank, and like him recite their heroic deeds. In their turn, the young men are al-



lowed to strike the painted post, and to say, not what they have done (their military career not having yet begun), but what they intend to do. The youths that speak well are encouraged with a howl from the warriors, who, when they disapprove, show it by hanging down their heads, and remaining silent. The desire to elicit the approbation of their superiors excites the warmest emulation among the young men, and taxes to the utmost all the energies of their minds.

When night comes, two hundred torches made of dry reeds, and frequently renewed, illumine the square, where the Indians dance until daylight. There is great monotony in these dances. A man sits down with a large kettle in which there is a little water, and which is covered over with deer-skin drawn as tight as possible. With one hand, he holds the kettle between his legs, and with the other he beats time on this kind of rude drum. The women form a circle round him at a certain distance from each other, and have their hands thrust into a ring of feathers which they twirl round their wrists, while they move in cadence from left to right. The men form another circle next to the one of the women, and keep at a distance of six feet from each other. Every one of them has his *chichicois*, with which he keeps time. The *chichicois* is a sort of oblong gourd bored at both extremities: through these holes a stick is run, the longest outside part of which serves as a handle. In the gourd there are small stones, or dry beans, which, when shaken, produce a considerable noise. As the women turn in dancing from left to right, the men move from right to left. The dancers, when fatigued, withdraw, and are often replaced by others. In proportion as the number of dancers increases or diminishes, the circles grow larger or smaller.

The next day, the Indians do not leave their huts



before they are summoned out by the Great Sun, who, at nine o'clock, makes his appearance on the public square, and where, having promenaded for some time with the war-chief, he orders the kettle-drum to be beaten. Then the warriors come out of their huts, and form themselves into two bands, to play at tennis. The one, with white feathers, is headed by the Great Sun, and the other, with red ones, by the war-chief. The game is: for one party to drive the tennis ball in the direction of the hut of the Great Sun, so as to make it strike the hut, and for the other party to oppose it, and to push the same ball toward the dwelling of the war-chief, with a similar intent. The contest generally lasts two hours, and is at an end when the ball strikes either hut. Then come war-dances; and in the evening, to refresh their wearied limbs, the people amuse themselves with bathing. This feast continues until the corn is eaten up, with the exception of what is reserved for the Great Sun, who alone has the privilege of carrying some of it away. It constitutes the seventh tribute.

October is the *moon of the turkeys*; November, the *moon of the buffaloes*; then follow the *moon of the bears*, the *moon of the geese*, the *moon of the chestnuts*, and the *moon of the walnuts*. On each of these moons, the Great Sun receives his monthly tribute.

There were some very remarkable traits in the national character of the Natchez, among which was the pre-eminence allowed to the male over the female sex. In all assemblies, either public or private, even in the privacy of the family circle, the youngest boys had the precedence over the oldest women, and when all the members of one family sat down to their meals, a boy, two years old, received his food before his mother was helped. Whatever impression this circumstance may have produced on the temper of the Natchez women, it

is certain that so much docility was inculcated by education into their minds, that a quarrel between husband and wife would have been looked upon as something monstrous.

If the women were docile and very industrious, they were, according to our standard of morality, extremely addicted, when unmarried, to the lowest profligacy. Strange to say, this profligacy was a merit in the estimation of the Natchez. Thus, all their women, while single, were allowed to sell their favors; and she who had acquired the wealthiest marriage portion by this abominable traffic, was looked upon as having the most attraction, and as being far superior to all the females of her tribe. She became an object of competition, and received the homages of the loftiest and most renowned warriors. However, as soon as they were married, these professed courtesans were immediately transformed into as many Lucretias, and both husband and wife became patterns of fidelity. They said, in explanation of this change in their conduct, "that having solemnly given away their persons, they had no longer a right to dispose as they pleased of that which they had pledged to another." The married woman being thus so remarkable for fidelity, industry, and docility, matrimonial happiness was as common among the Natchez as it is rare among other people, and although they had the right of repudiation, they very seldom exercised it;—a thing which is not to be wondered at, since no one must be supposed to be willing to renounce the sweet slumbers which he enjoys under the soft rays of a perpetual honey-moon.

Marriages were never contracted without the unanimous assent of the elder members of the two families. When that was obtained, the two heads of the families, or the two *ancients*, or *fathers*, as they were called, met

and settled the preliminary conditions. The young people were never forced into alliances against their will, but at the same time they could not gratify their inclination without its being approved by those members of their families to whom they owed respect and obedience. It was thought that no one had a right to introduce into a family a member that would not be acceptable. It is clear that the philosophy of elopements was not understood by those barbarians, and was reserved for a more refined state of civilization.

When a marriage had been determined upon, the head of the family of the bride, *the ancient*, went with her and her whole family to the residence of the bridegroom, who there stood surrounded also by his own family. The oldest man on the side of the bridegroom welcomed his compeer in age on the side of the bride, with this brief salutation: "*Cabanacte*"—*is it thou?* "*Manatte*"—*yes*, answered the other. "*Petchi*"—*sit down*, replied the first. Then the whole assembly took seats, and the most grave and profound silence followed the laconic dialogue which I have related. After a lapse of a quarter of an hour, the oldest man rose, and ordering those who were to be united to stand before him, he addressed to them an allocution, in which he recapitulated all the duties they voluntarily assumed, and gave them abundant and wholesome advice. When this sermon was over, the father of the bridegroom handed to his son the present which he was to make to the family of his future wife, and the father of the bride stepped forward and put himself by the side of his daughter. Then the bridegroom said to the bride, "Wilt thou have me for thy husband?" She answered, "With all my heart; love me as much as I love thee, for thou art and thou shalt be my only love." When these words were uttered, the bridegroom held

over the head of his bride the gift which he presented to her family, and said, "I love thee: therefore do I take thee for my wife: and here is the present with which I buy thee from thy parents." Then he delivered the present to the father of the bride.

The bridegroom wore a tuft of feathers at the top of the plaited lock of hair which fell down on his left shoulder, and at the lower end of which was tied an oak twig with its leaves. In his left hand he held a bow and arrow. The tuft of feathers was an emblem of the power and command which he had the right to exercise in his household; the oak twig signified that he was not afraid of going to the woods in quest of game; the bow and the arrows meant that he would always be ready to meet a foe, and to defend his wife and children.

The bride had in her left hand a green twig of the laurel tree, and in her right hand an ear of corn. The laurel twig signified that she would preserve her fame ever fair, and smelling as sweet as the laurel leaf; the ear of corn meant that she would know how to prepare it for her husband's food, and to fulfill the other duties imposed upon her as a loving and a dutiful wife.

When the bridegroom and the bride had exchanged the words which I have recited in the preceding paragraphs, the bride dropped the ear of corn which she held in her right hand, and tendered that hand to the bridegroom, who took it and said, "I am thy husband." She replied, "I am thy wife." Then the bridegroom went round, and grasped the hand of every member of the family of his wife. When this was over, he took her by the arm and led her to every member of his own family, to whom she was introduced by him, and with whom she shook hands. In conclusion, he walked with

her to his bed, and said to her, "Here is our bed ; keep it undefiled."

Does not the simple relation of their marriage rites carry the mind back to those antique customs which Herodotus has described in such bewitching style? Are they not impregnated with the soft graces of the poetry of Greece?—and, at the same time, do they not assume a character of scriptural austerity and beauty! To me the whole scene is redolent with the atmosphere of Arabia, and conjures up in my imagination the glows and tints of the patriarchal days so beautifully described in the Holy Book.

The nation of the Natchez was composed of three classes: the Great Sun, or the sovereign, and the Little Suns who constituted the nobility; then came the men of consideration or gentry. The plebeians were known under the appellation of "miche quipy," or the *stinking*. The Natchez, in order to be sure that their sovereigns should always be of the blood of the man who had come from the sun to civilize them, had established as a fundamental law of their national polity, that the right of succession to the throne should be imparted to the men only through the female line. Thus the female descendants of a Great Sun always remained noble, and retained the privilege of giving birth to the sovereign; but the grandson of a Great Sun was no more than a *man of consideration*, and his great-grandson became a plebeian—one of the *stinking*—while nobility was perpetual in the female line. After some generations the nobles, although from the same parent stock, were not related at all, or not at least within those degrees which prevented matrimonial alliances; and yet they could not intermarry on account of two fundamental laws: one prescribing that none of the nobility should be put to death, and the other ordaining

that, after the death of a male or female noble, his wife or her husband should be immolated. The nobles were therefore obliged to abstain from marrying among their equals; which obligation was revolting to the pride of many. There are very few women who have not a leaning to aristocracy, and this may be owing to the innate distinction of their nature. Thus it appears that this custom, which forced them to marry among the plebeians, or stinking, had become offensive to their proud and delicate nostrils. Le Page du Pratz relates a singular attempt made by one of them to produce a revolution, or a change in the organic laws of her tribe.

Le Page du Pratz had lived eight years in the French settlement near the Natchez, and had become well known among those Indians, who held him in high esteem. One day a female Sun entered his room with her daughter, a girl of eighteen; she locked the door carefully, and sat down for a few minutes in deep and dignified silence. Le Page, knowing the gravity of Indian manners, wondered all the while at the meaning of this mysterious visit, but said nothing, and patiently waited for the communication which would be made at last. After having rested in silence as long as she thought becoming, she rose and thus addressed Le Page: "We all know, and I know better than any body else, that thou art a true man; that falsehood abideth not in thy heart, and that thy tongue hateth the profusion of words. Thou speakest our language. We love thee as a brother, and we regret that thou art not one of our Suns. I have matters of deep import to communicate—wherefore open thy ears and thy heart to receive the impression of my words. But close thy mouth, and never trust to the winds what I am to say to thee in secrecy!" Here she stopped again, and after

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a short silence observed, as if in doubt, "But shall I be listened to?" Now she remained mute for a considerable time, and seemed buried in profound meditation. Le Page, whose mind was teeming with conjectures about this strange scene, broke the silence he had preserved so far, and said, "My ears are open as thou wishest, and yet I hear nothing but the whistling of the wind."

Then she resumed her discourse in this manner: "My daughter, whom thou seest here, is young; but if she has the weak body of a woman, she has the strong mind of a man. Therefore, knowing that her lips are sealed, I have not feared to bring her with me, and to let her hear my words to thee. When thy countrymen speak, I listen, because although many are light-headed, some are wise and know much. I have heard them say that some of our customs are bad and wrongful; that in their country the noble marries with the noble, and the ignoble with the ignoble, and that each class fares the better for it; that it is cruel to force the wife to die with her husband, and the husband with the wife; that the Great Spirit, whose laws the French follow as they are communicated to them by the '*speaking bark*' which he gave them, frowns on such a barbarous custom; that it is an error to believe that husband and wife can continue to live as such in the world of spirits, because spirits have no solid bodies and no sexes, wherefore they can not cohabit and procreate; and that it is foolish in the Natchez to believe that they will have *there* the same pleasures and avocations which they pursue *here*. I have pondered on their remarks concerning these matters and many others, and I think they talk with wisdom. Our customs are bad, and lead to the destruction of our race. But how are we to change them? Who will have the energy and power to



make the attempt, and to crush all opposition? Therefore have I come to thee whom I love, trust, and respect. Marry my daughter; she is the nearest of kin to the Great Sun, and thy son, if she brings one to thee, will be our sovereign on a future day. Educated by thee, and supported by the French, he will have the mind, the will, and the power to change those laws which you look upon as nefarious."

Le Page was taken by surprise, and at first was at a loss for an answer. He knew that there are certain propositions of which women never forgive the rejection; and as he was not willing to incur deadly hostility, he sought to frame an answer which would make his refusal palatable. "Thy daughter," said he, "is as fair as the rainbow, and my heart leaps toward her. But far away, at the place where I was born, is a blue-eyed woman, to whom I am married, and to whom I must return as soon as I can. While she lives, the God whose laws I obey, forbids that I should take unto my bosom another wife. It is an obstacle, as thou seest, which can not be removed. Therefore, be satisfied with my thanks and my gratitude." The old female Sun listened with evident disappointment, and hung down her head as if in sorrow; but she gave no sign of ill-feeling or resentment. Saluting Le Page with truly royal dignity, and putting meaningly her index on her lips, she departed with her daughter. This anecdote has a raciness which vouches for its authenticity, and is an interesting illustration of the ideas which were originating from the association of the Natchez with the French. •

The Natchez, when they had causes of war, pursued, before they began hostilities, a certain preliminary course, which, being almost general among the Indian tribes, must be looked upon as proceeding from a cus-



tom which must have been their *law of nations*. The old warriors composed what was called the council of war, to deliberate on that question. If they came to the conclusion that their nation had been injured, they sent an embassy to seek redress. If that redress was granted, they smoked the calumet of peace, which was a pipe ornamented with a variety of decorations, and with feathers of the white eagle set in the shape of a fan. If satisfaction was refused, the ambassadors speedily returned home, and the warriors assembled for the war-dance, a ceremony during which they smoked the calumet of war, which was shaped like the calumet of peace, but with the exception, that its ornaments and colors were different, and that its fan was composed of the feathers of the flamingo. Their warriors were divided into three classes: the *true warriors*, or those whose courage had been tried on all occasions, and had invariably been found the same at all times; the *ordinary warriors*; and the *apprentice warriors*, or young men, who were beginning their military career. A formal declaration of war consisted in a hieroglyphic picture, executed in a rude manner, and left by the nation declaring war, near the principal village of the nation against which war was declared. It was intended, I suppose, for some such manifesto as is published in our days, on the like occasions, by the civilized nations of Christendom.

When war was resolved on, they painted their bodies in various colors, so as to make themselves as frightfully-looking devils as possible, and prepared for battle by feasting: a practice which they held in common with the Spartans. On a day solemnly fixed, they gathered in circles round all the delicacies which they could command, such as fish, deer, buffalo, or bear meat, either fresh or smoked, and particularly a roasted

dog, which was a dish as much esteemed by them as a roasted peacock by the Romans: corn was liberally used, and was dressed in various ways, of which the most relished was one which is still in fashion among the old French population of Louisiana, and which is called "*sagamité*." They drank on this occasion an exhilarating beverage, which consisted in a fermented liquor, made with the leaves of the Cassia berry-tree. To this feast the warriors always came fully equipped, and with their weapons in the best order. Before the warriors partook of the repast set before them, the oldest among them, so old as to be incapable of active service in the field, holding the calumet of war in his right hand, made a speech, in which he recited his exploits, and exhorted his companions to emulate his deeds. One of them once concluded his address in this way: I give it as a sample of this kind of oratory.

"Now, my brothers," said he, "depart with confidence. Let your courage be mighty, your hearts big, your feet light, your eyes open, your smell keen, your ears attentive, your skins proof against heat, cold, water, and fire. If the enemy should be too powerful, remember that your lives are precious, and that one scalp lost by you is one cause of shame brought upon your nation. Therefore, if it be necessary, do not hesitate to fly, and in that case, be as wary as the serpent, and conceal yourselves with the skill of the fox, or of the squirrel. But although you run away, do not forget that you are men, that you are true warriors, and that you must not fear the foe. Wait awhile, and your turn will come. Then, when your enemy is in your power, and you can assail him with advantage, fling all your arrows at him, and when they are exhausted, come to close quarters, strike, knock down, and let your tomahawks be drunk with blood."

This rough kind of eloquence seldom failed to provoke enthusiastic shouts. Satisfied with the effect he had produced, the orator filled the calumet of war with tobacco, drew a puff, and passed the instrument to the war-chief, from whom it circulated among the rest of the warriors. When this was over, the war-chief cut a slice of the roasted dog, the other warriors did the same, and ate while they walked very fast, to signify that a good warrior ought not to stop even to take his food, that he ought to be constantly in motion, and ever watchful like a dog. Then they sat down and began their repast in earnest. But a young man, who was placed in ambuscade at a distance of two hundred or three hundred steps, suddenly shouted the death-cry; spontaneously all the warriors seized their weapons, and ran to the spot from which issued the shout. When they came to it, the same young warrior repeated the same shriek, to which all the warriors responded in the same manner.

Then, they came back together to continue the repast which they had abandoned, but hardly were they at it, when another young man repeated the same operation, which produced the same effects. After several interruptions of this kind, which were intended as practical lessons, the war beverage, composed, as I have already said, with the leaves of the cassia berry-tree, was introduced, to the great satisfaction of the warriors, who partook very freely of the intoxicating liquor. When the eating and drinking was over, the warriors planted the war-post, which was painted red, and the top of which was shaped so as to represent the head of a man. Every warrior, in his turn, rushed furiously at the post and struck it with his tomahawk, in uttering the death-cry. He then recited his exploits with emphasis, and insulted the war-post, which represented

the enemy. He concluded his taunting speech with a tremendous howl, which was answered by the other warriors. When every one of them had gone through this monotonous exhibition, they began the war-dance, which they executed in their war-dress, and with all their weapons about their persons. While the warriors were thus engaged, the rest of the nation assumed the garb of affliction, and observed a strict fast. The war feast lasted three days: after which, the warriors marched against the enemy with all the provisions prepared for them by their wives.

Pitched battles among the Indians were of rare occurrence. War with them consisted in ambuscades and surprises. They delighted in picking up some stragglers from the nation against which they were warring—poor wretches who, while fishing, hunting, or engaged in some other peaceful avocations, were startled by the unexpected and terrific whoop of an unmerciful foe. But the greatest of all exploits for them, was, to surprise a village at night, to kill and scalp all the men, to burn down to the ground all the habitations, and to carry away all the women and children, when they did not kill them on the spot, while intoxicated with rage and with the reeking vapors of indiscriminate slaughter. Then, as a recording monument, and in glorification of what they had done, they nailed to a tree a hieroglyphic picture with two bloody arrows, forming the St. Andrew's cross. After this, they retreated from the enemy's territory with the utmost speed, and had recourse to every stratagem to conceal the route they took, in order to escape pursuit. They made slaves of their prisoners when those prisoners were women and children, and they cropped short the hair of such as were thus reduced to slavery. But when it was a man whom they carried back to their homes, their triumph

was complete, because the whole tribe was to be entertained with the spectacle of the torments to be inflicted on the prisoner.

On the day fixed for this exhibition, of which the Indians were as fond as the Romans were of the fights of their gladiators, or of the mutilation of human beings by wild beasts in the arena, above which sat sovereignty in the imperial shape of a Cæsar, two posts, ten feet long, were driven into the ground; another post was placed transversely at the distance of two feet from the soil, and another, transversely also, at the distance of five feet from the one below. Then the arms and legs of the patient were tied to the four right angles which were thus formed. Before this was done, however, the warrior whose prisoner he was, stunned him with the blow of a wooden tomahawk, and raised his scalp. A large fire was made up, and every one, lighting a long reed, applied it to some part of the prisoner's body. It was then that the Indians taxed their ingenuity to inflict the keenest torment, and he who succeeded in extracting from the sufferer a cry, or any demonstration of pain, was rapturously applauded. But this satisfaction was very seldom obtained. Commonly, the patient displayed unbroken fortitude, and the impassibility of inanimate matter. Far from weeping or begging for mercy, he sang as if in defiance of his enemies, heaped upon them every opprobrious epithet that he thought calculated to kindle their fury, and never ceased to provoke their resentment until death stopped his voice. It sometimes happened that some tender-hearted woman, wishing to put an end to his prolonged agony, gave him a blow which cheated his tormentors of their prey. Not unfrequently also, a young widow, whose mate had died in the war, took him for her husband, and thus saved him from the horrible death to which he was destined.

The Indians understood the art of making fortifications sufficiently strong to resist the means of assault which were brought to bear upon them. Trunks of trees, of a circumference of six feet, were driven five or six feet into the ground, leaving ten feet out with sharpened tops. The joints of these posts were strengthened inside by the application of other posts of the diameter of one foot. This wooden wall was protected outside by towers erected at the distance of forty steps from one another. Its inside was supported by an elevation or bank of earth three feet wide by three in height, which bank was lined, to keep the earth compact, with green branches and leaves serried together by strong stakes. They showed great intelligence in opening loopholes; and all along their walls, about five feet above the parapet of earth of which I have spoken, they had a sort of pentice made with branches and splinters of wood, as a protection against grenades. In the center of the fort, they planted a tree, the branches of which had been lopped off at about nine inches from the trunk, so that they might serve to go up to the top, where, when necessary, the Indians placed a sentinel to watch the movements of the enemy. Round this tree, or ladder, they constructed several cabins, or sheds, as an asylum for the women and children against falling arrows. Round the fort were several fortified houses, which were its outposts and dependencies: they were useful in times of peace, as relieving the fort from many of its encumbrances; but when a serious attack was made, they were generally abandoned after a short resistance. If you cut the wicker strings which bind the hoop of a barrel, and if you fling that hoop on the ground, the figure which it will form, when both extremities of the hoop lie apart and get loose from each other, will represent the fort and its entrance. This

entrance always fronted some stream or spring from which water was procured, and was defended by a truncated tower. In cases of extreme danger, this passage was blocked up with every kind of briers and thorny shrubs.

When a nation was so badly defeated that it feared entire destruction, it applied to another nation, the mediation of which it invoked, through ambassadors who carried presents. If the victor rejected this mediation, the conquered nation abandoned its territory, and incorporated itself with the nation for whose protection it had sued.

I have already said that the Indians, although generally brave, were extremely economical of their lives. In imitation of Diomedes and Ulysses before the walls of Troy, and of other heroes elsewhere, they delighted in murdering their enemies when asleep, but yet, in spite of all their prudence, some of them were killed occasionally; and then they were scalped, when possible, by their own companions, who were anxious not to leave in the hands of their enemies such trophies and proofs of victory. There was another circumstance which contributed to render their wars less destructive than ours, and which would throw some embarrassment in the way of our modern generals. Thus, when the party that had gone on a war expedition returned home with the loss of some warriors, the war-chief paid an indemnity to their families. A very humane and considerate provision for barbarians to think of, and a powerful check on the wanton sacrifice of lives by military leaders.

The Indians were not free from some of those vices which are so prevalent among us, and which a high state of moral and intellectual cultivation has failed so far to eradicate. For instance, gamesters, although held in bad repute, were common among them; and



there was one particular game which they preferred above all others. It could be played by two only; one darted a long pole, in the shape of a bishop's cross, and at the same time, before the pole fell to the ground, hurled down on its edge, in the same direction, a heavy circular stone in the shape of a wheel, while the other player also flung his pole. He whose pole was nearest to the stone when it stopped rolling, won a point, and had the throwing of both pole and stone, which was a great advantage, as he could measure their velocity so as to make them meet. As it is with us, the Indians generally began with playing for trifles, but when excited, they raised their stakes, and ended often by losing all their worldly possessions. Human nature is always the same at bottom, however modified it may be at the surface, whether it remains in the original nakedness of barbarism, or conceals itself under the varied garments of civilization.

The women also had their game, but it was a very innocent one, because they never staked any thing for fear of offending their husbands. They played three by three, with three pieces of differently painted reeds, nine inches long, with one side flat and the other convex. One of the players held the three pieces in her open palm; one of the other players struck them with a small rod. They fell to the ground, and if two of the reeds had their convex sides up, it constituted the winning of a point. This certainly was a very sinless way for the Indian ladies of fashion to while away a wearisome hour.

The French, so famous for their politeness, were struck with the innate courtesy of the Indians, and have expressed their admiration in pages which are now lying before us. If an Indian met a Frenchman, he went up to him, took and squeezed his hand, and with



a gentle inclination of the head, exclaimed, "*Is it thou, my friend?*" and if he had nothing to say worthy of utterance, he passed on without indulging in idle conversation—a proof of infinite good sense, and a thing well deserving of imitation.

Should an Indian overtake a Frenchman in walking, he never would pass before him, and would patiently follow behind at some distance. But if in a hurry, he would deviate from the path, take a long circuit so as to keep out of the stranger's sight, and come back to his direct way at a considerable distance ahead.

On their receiving a visit, they shook the visitor's hand, and after a few words of greeting, they invited him to sit down, generally on a bed used for this purpose. Then a profound silence was observed, until the visitor, after a few minutes of rest, thought proper to speak. After he had spoken, the wife of the person who was visited brought what victuals she might have ready, and her husband said to the visitor, "*eat.*" It was necessary to taste of every thing that was presented, otherwise it would have been looked upon as a demonstration of contempt or fastidiousness.

However numerous the Indians might be when they met to converse, there was but one who spoke at a time, and he was never interrupted. In their public councils, the greatest decorum prevailed, and each one in his turn, if he chose, addressed the meeting, which was composed of as good listeners as any orator might wish for. When a question had been discussed, and had to be put to the vote, a quarter of an hour was allowed for silent meditation, and then the sense of the assembly was taken. The impetuous volubility of the French was to them a matter of surprise; and they could not help smiling when they saw the French talk together with such vehement gesticulations, all of them

speaking at the same time, and none of them listening. Le Page du Pratz relates with great simplicity of heart, that he had remarked the smile which flitted on the lips of the Indians on such occasions, and that for more than two years he had inquired of the Indians for the cause of it, without obtaining any other answer than this one—“*What is it to thee? It does not concern thee.*” At last, one of them yielding to his solicitations, said, “My friend, do not be angry then, if I tell thee the truth, which by thy importunity is forced out of me. If we smile when we see the French talk together, it is because we are exceedingly amused, and because they put us in mind of a cackling flock of frightened geese.”

If the French admitted that the Indians were as polite as themselves, it can not be denied that these barbarians were also more careful observers of the rules of hygiene than their mercurial pale-faced brothers. For instance, they never could be persuaded to eat of the skillfully-made dishes of the French, because they said that they were afraid of the ingredients which entered into their composition. They never ate salad nor any thing raw or uncooked except ripe fruit, and they never could relish wine. Unfortunately, these men who were so remarkable for their enlightened sobriety in every thing else, could not resist the fatal allurements of brandy, known in their language as the *fire liquor*, and they thoroughly despised the French for mixing it with water.

In one respect, they were superior to every nation of antiquity, or of modern times. *They ate only when they were hungry*, and therefore had no fixed hour for their meals, nor did they eat together, the promptings of the stomach not being the same with all. The only exception was, when a feast was given: then the men ate

they entertained for the cherished relics of their ancestry; and more than one Indian nation, when emigrating, carried away the parental bones, to which they clung with an intenseness of passion, hardly to be conceived in these our days of worldly philosophy.

Who cares now for the dead, except the surgeon, for dissecting purposes, or the sexton, for his fee? Who cares for the dead in this utilitarian age? To what practical use can they be turned, except to make coat buttons, or knife handles, or whistles, with their bones? Who thinks of the dead, except it be to reflect on the direful necessity they impose upon us, of having unhealthy grave-yards, and to devise the means of stripping these places of solemn repose of their frigid aspect, and to convert them into pleasure-gardens, where the tombs, or what purports to be such, are decked in gay colors, pagan ornaments, and a meretricious look: and instead of teaching morality and religion, leave the mind of the visitor free to discuss its ordinary pursuits of pleasure or of gain, and invite the lover's hand to snatch the rose growing out of his father's dust, to present it to his lady love, who stands by, and smiles on the profane donation. Fy! Who cares for the dead? Is it he who sells his ancestral portraits at the auctioneer's shop, or inventories the very sheets of the death-bed, to ascertain their value, and to secure the strict distribution of every dime of their worth among the greedy claimants? There is a land where I have descended into family vaults, in which a solitary lamp cast a dubious light, making darkness visible. There lay, in august repose, twenty generations, side by side. There, the imposing severity of the marble monuments, and the austere-looking statues of the departed, sleeping so solemnly on the top of their own tombs.—There, the soul-moving records of the past, often chiseled by

the hand of genius.—There, the time-honored inscriptions.—There, that peculiar smell which reminds one of breathing the atmosphere of antiquity.—There, every thing impressive, awfully monitory, and Christian-like! There, profane thought was put to flight, and mundane mirth was chilled into reverential sobriety! As I came out with a heart overflowing with emotion, and my sight rested on the moss-covered, swallow-tenanted turrets of the family mansion, where, for centuries, the same race of people had dwelt in joy or in sorrow, my eyes became suffused with involuntary tears, and this indistinct and half-muttered expression of my feelings rose up to my lips: “Blessed be the land where there are such connecting links between the dead and the living!”

In 1725, *Stung Serpent*, of whom I have spoken when relating the first expedition of Bienville against the Natchez, in 1716, departed from his beautiful native hills overhanging the bed of the father of rivers, and went on his final pilgrimage to the world of spirits. The better to illustrate the manners, laws, and customs of the Natchez, I shall recite what occurred on that occasion. Although I shall confine myself to a strictly historical narrative, I believe it will be found not destitute of dramatic and romantic interest.

Stung Serpent being dangerously ill, the chief of the guardians of the temple came to Fort Rosalie to inform the French of this fact, and to let them know that the Great Sun, the brother of Stung Serpent, according to a mutual promise not to survive one another, had determined to redeem his pledge to the dying man. This was a startling information, because the death of these two chiefs at the same time, was calculated to be a heavy blow to the nation on account of the number of victims that would be sacrificed in their honor. The

commander of Fort Rosalie, accompanied by Le Page du Pratz and others, hastened to the chief village, to inquire into the circumstances of the case. They found the Great Sun in his hut, and with him they went to visit Stung Serpent. It soon became evident to the French, that the sick prince had breathed his last. But the Great Sun was still in doubt, and when the French were preparing to retire, he stopped Le Page by the arm, and said: "*Ouitigui-tlatagoup-coheyogo*"—"is he dead truly? What dost thou say?" Le Page answered, "Noco," "I do not know"—in order to prolong an illusion which he did not wish suddenly to destroy.

The French accompanied the Great Sun back to his dwelling, into which he invited them. As soon as he crossed his threshold, he exclaimed, "My brother is dead"—and he squatted down with his head sunk on his breast, and his hands covering his eyes. On hearing these words, the Great Sun's wife uttered fearful shrieks, which were echoed all round, and went multiplying through the village, every hut resounding with wailings and lamentations. Then, muskets were fired to notify the neighboring villages, which in their turn answered the firing. A short time after, the Great Sun's *word-bearer*, or *chancellor*, came in and wept. The Great Sun raised his head and looked meaningly at his wife, who threw water on the hearth and extinguished the fire. At this sight, the *word-bearer* saluted the Great Sun with a howl, and departed. As soon as he was out of the hut, he uttered a frightful shriek, which was taken up by all the people of the village, and it went on wildly spreading from echo to echo, through every village. The shriek of the *word-bearer* had given the Natchez to understand that the Great Sun had ordered the fire of his own hearth to be extinguished, and therefore that every other fire was to

be put out: which portended the approaching death of the sovereign. Hence this universal lamentation.

Le Page du Pratz, who, for several years, had been on a footing of intimacy with the Stung Serpent and with the Great Sun, approached that sovereign, who was still squatting on the floor, and tapping him on the shoulder, said, "Hast thou ceased to be a man since thy brother's death? Thy people inform us that thou art resolved to put an end to thy life, through grief, and because thou art too weak to bear thy loss with the heart of a warrior. Thy French friends can not believe that thou art such a coward. Tell them, therefore, that thy people do not understand thee rightly. Swear to us that they are mistaken, and that thou shalt not commit the vile suicide which they suspect." The Great Sun looked up at Le Page, and answered calmly:—"Rest assured that I no longer think of it. Farewell, then, and sleep in peace. The night steals upon us apace." However, there was something in his eye which contradicted his words, and the French, not altogether trusting to his declaration, left at his door a soldier to watch his doings. They went back to the Stung Serpent's dwelling, and they found his corpse stretched in pomp and in full dress on his bed. His face was painted with vermilion, his feet were encased in beautifully embroidered moccasins, and his head was encircled with the crown of white and red feathers, as a prince of the royal blood. His weapons were suspended all round his bed, and consisted of a double-barreled gun, a pistol, a bow, a quiver full of arrows, and a tomahawk. There were also to be seen, ostentatiously displayed, all the calumets of peace which had been tendered to him during his lifetime, to sue for his mercy or protection. At the head of his bed, stood a red pole supporting a chain made of reeds, painted red,

and composed of forty-six rings. The rings meant the number of foes he had killed in war.

All the people composing the household of the prince, stood round him in the attitude of mourners. At certain hours, as if he had been alive, food was brought to him: and as, of course, it remained untasted, his body servant would, every time, break out into the same monotonous lamentation: "Why," said he, "wilt thou not accept of our offerings? Dost thou no longer relish thy favorite dishes? Hast thou any reason to be displeased with us, and dost thou reject our services as disagreeable to thee? Ah! thou dost not speak to us as it was thy wont. Wherefore, thou must be dead. Well, then, all is over—our occupation is gone—and since thou leavest us, we will follow thee to the land of spirits." He concluded every time this expostulation with the Indian death-cry, which was repeated by all the people present, and which, from mouth to mouth, outside of the hut, was to be heard swelling up in the distance, leaping from village to village, and ending with one appalling chorus, which congealed the blood within the heart. There also stood in the hut of the Stung Serpent, besides his favorite wife, a second one, whom he used to keep in another village—his wood-bearer—his physician—his body-servant—his pipe-bearer—and some old women. They were all destined to be strangled at his funeral, to keep company with the dead in the other world, whither he had gone.

A woman of noble birth, who had carried on an amour with Stung Serpent, whom she had not been able to marry, since, as it will be recollected, the nobles could not marry any one of their class, put herself voluntarily among the number of those who were to accompany the dead to the world of spirits. She was called by the French "*La Glorieuse*," or "*the proud*," on



account of her majestic figure, of the haughty expression of her face, and because she consented to hold intercourse with none of the French except those of noble birth. She was acquainted with the virtues of a great many medicinal plants, and this female Esculapius had saved the lives of many of the sick among the French. The Stung Serpent's favorite wife seeing how sadly impressed the French were with the spectacle which was offered to them, addressed them in these terms: "Chiefs and nobles of France, I see how much you regret my husband. Truly, his death is of much consequence for the French as well as for our nation, because he carried them all in his heart. Whenever the French chiefs spoke to him, their words dwelt forever in his ears. He trod the same path with the French, and he loved them more than his own self. Now, he has ascended to the world of spirits; in two days I shall be with him, and tell him that I have seen your hearts grow heavy at the sight of his dead body. When I am gone, Frenchmen, remember that my children are orphans, remember that you have loved their father, and let the dew of your friendship fall plentifully on the children of him who has always been the friend of the French." After this speech, she resumed her seat with dignified composure.

The night being far advanced, the French retired to a lodge which had been prepared for them, but they requested the servants of the Great Sun to watch him closely, and if they saw any thing suspicious, to give them timely information. At daybreak, a breathless messenger, trembling with agitation, rushed into the apartment where the French slept, woke them up, and told them that the Great Sun was attempting his life. Hastily dressing themselves with such of their clothes as they could put their hands on in the dark, they ran

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to the Great Sun's dwelling. There, every thing was in the wildest uproar and confusion. The presumptive heir to the throne was struggling with the sovereign, and trying to wrest from his hands the gun with which, it appears, he had shown the intention to put an end to his life. A number of nobles and men of consideration, whom the excess of fear seemed to have palsied into a trance, stood looking on without daring to interfere. Le Page went up to the Great Sun, laid his hand gently on the gun, and said, "What! yesterday the noble sovereign of the Natchez swore to me, his friend, that he would not kill himself; that he was a man, and that I might rely on his word. To-day, what has become of that word? What has become of that man? Art thou both a liar and a coward? Speak!" At these words he dropped the gun, stared at Le Page with a vacant look, then rubbed his eyes as if awaking from a dream; and as if consciousness had suddenly returned, he extended his hand to him, covered his face and wept.


When the nobles saw the success obtained by Le Page, they advanced one after the other to shake him by the hand, but without uttering one word. The silence became so deep that, although the room was crowded to suffocation, the light buzzing of a fly would have been heard.

Looking round, Le Page saw that the wife of the Great Sun still continued to be in a state of great perturbation. He approached her and inquired if she was sick. She answered, "*yes*;" and then sinking her voice into a whisper, she said: "Stay awhile with us. If not, my husband dies, and then woe to the Natchez. Remain by his side, for it is to thy voice alone that he listens. Thy voice is weighty, and at the same time it is as pointed as an arrow. Who would have dared to speak to him as thou didst? Who would have suc-

ceeded half so well? But he knows thee to have been the true friend of his brother, and to be now his own best friend. We all respect thee, for thou art not eternally laughing, as the French always do. When thou spakest to the Great Sun, didst thou observe how all eyes feasted on thee, and how all ears drank thy words? Yes; thy words have all been garnered up in our hearts."

In compliance with this touching appeal, Le Page du Pratz moved silently to the side of the Great Sun, who extended his hand to him, and said in a loud voice so as to be heard by the whole assembly, "My friend, there is so much grief in my heart that my eyes, although open, have not seen that the French were standing up. My mouth has forgotten to invite them to sit down. What will they think of this churlish want of courtesy? I pray thee to excuse me with them, and to tell them to take seats."

Le Page answered that no apology was necessary; that the French were well acquainted with his good breeding, and would leave him for the present to enjoy the rest of which it was evident that he stood in need. "But," added he, "I shall cease to be thy friend, if thou dost not order fire to be lighted on thy hearth, and if thou dost not command the same to be done in the dwelling of every one of thy people. If thou compliest with my request, I shall stay to be present at the funeral of thy brother; and when it is over, I must insist on thy coming to my house to break the fast of grief and eat the meal of consolation." The Great Sun pressed the hand of Le Page in silent acquiescence, and drawing himself up to his full height, looked round with inexpressible majesty, and said: "Since the chiefs and nobles of France love me and wish me to live, be it so; my life is safe in my own



keeping; let all the fires be relighted. I will wait until natural death reunites me to my brother. I am old and can not tarry long. In the mean time, I will walk in the path of the French. Had it not been for them, I should have been now with my brother, and to do me honor, the hills of the Natchez would have been strewn with the dead."

Emboldened by their success, the French strongly remonstrated against the absurd, inhuman, and fatal custom so long observed by the Natchez, to sacrifice so many lives on the death of one of their chiefs. But all that they obtained was, that the number of victims should be restricted to the two wives of the dead chief, to his physician, his word-bearer, his body-servant, his pipe-bearer, and some old women. "All the people composing my brother's household must die," said the Great Sun, "because they are his *meat and victuals*. It can not be otherwise." On that day, an old woman who was called *the wicked*, and who had committed some crime or other, was put to death, and a plebeian child was strangled by its own father and mother. Strange to say, this horrible crime raised the murderers above the class of the *stinking*, to which they belonged, and transformed them into nobles. On that day also there was twice, in the morning and in the evening, a minute rehearsal of the tragedy which was to be acted on the day of the funeral. Thus, the grand master came out in full official costume from the hut of Stung Serpent, accompanied by the two widows, the word-bearer, the pipe-bearer, the physician, the body-servant, and the old women who were destined to die. They moved in solemn procession, each of the victims being attended by eight of his nearest kinsmen or relations, whose duty it was to put them to death. One carried an uplifted tomahawk, with which he now and

then threatened to strike the victim;—another one, the mat on which the *doomed* was to sit down;—a third, the rope for strangling;—the fourth, carried the deer skin which was to be thrown over the head and shoulders of the victim;—the fifth, a wooden bowl with five or six large pills of tobacco, which were administered to the patient before undergoing strangulation;—the sixth, a small earthen bottle containing a pint of water, which the victim was allowed to drink to facilitate the passage of the pills. The two other persons who followed, were destined to put themselves on the right and left of the poor suffering wretch, in order to draw the rope tight, and to make the operation as quickly effective as possible.

The eight persons who attended in this way every one of the victims, became nobles; and therefore to be one of them was an advantage which was much coveted. These executioners and future nobles walked two by two in the rear of the victims, whose hair was painted red, and who held in the right hand the shell of a river *muscle*, usually measuring seven inches in length by three or four in breadth. As to the executioners, they wore red feathers tied to the long tuft of plaited hair which hung down on their left shoulder, and their hands were painted red. On reaching the public square where the temple stood, the persons who were to die, and their executioners, shouted together the death-cry;—every victim put himself on his mat and executed on it the death dance, while the executioners did the same round them. It was the most appalling spectacle that the imagination could conceive. After each rehearsal, the procession returned in the same order to the hut of the deceased.

On that day, a half serious, half ludicrous accident took place. An Indian, named Ette-Actal, was led to

the Great Sun, under the escort of thirty men. This Indian had married a female Sun, and on her death, his fate was to be sacrificed, according to the good old custom of his nation. But Ette-Actal's mind happened to be in advance of the age in which he lived, and he thought that to run away and to save his life, was a philosophical innovation to which it might be profitable to call the attention of the Natchez, and of which, at any rate, he ought to make the experiment. Putting into action his ideas of reform, he took to his canoe and paddled lustily down the Mississippi to New Orleans, where he placed himself under the protection of Bienville of whom he became the voluntary slave. But the love of country was strong in him, and now and then, he obtained permission to visit his friends and relations among the Natchez, after he felt assured that from the lapse of time since the funeral of his wife, and on account of the situation he occupied in relation to Bienville, the governor of Louisiana, he had no longer any thing to fear from his countrymen. But now that Bienville had been recalled to France, and that the presence of Ette-Actal in the village of the Natchez had reminded them of the old debt he had omitted to pay, they had arrested him with the intention of putting him to death at the funeral of the Stung Serpent.

When this Indian found himself a prisoner in the hut of the deceased, without any hope of escape, he began to give the most unequivocal signs of despair. At this sight, the favorite wife of Stung Serpent strode up haughtily to him, and said: "Art thou not a warrior?" "Yes," answered he, with a fresh gush of tears. "And yet thou weepest," continued she. "Is life so dear to thee? If it be so, it is not meet that thou shouldst come with us. Hence—begone—go, thou coward, and live among women." "Certainly," exclaimed Ette-Ac-

tal, "life is dear to me, and I wish to keep it for my own uses and purposes, and I should be happy to live among women, as thou sayest, in the hope of leaving a large posterity of children." Greatly incensed at this cynical retort, the princess repeated with increased vehemence: "Hence, cowardly dog! It is not decent that thou shouldst pollute us with thy company in our way to the world of spirits. Thy soul belongs to the earth, and there let it rot with thy body. Hence—let me not see thee again!" Never was order obeyed with more alacrity, and Ette-Actal vanished with the rapidity of lightning. But on that day, three decrepid old women, who were related to him by blood, and whose infirmities had disgusted them with life, offered to die in his place, and that substitution was accepted. This voluntary sacrifice of these three kinswomen of Ette-Actal's, not only secured to him his life for the future, but from a plebeian, or *stinking*, that he was, raised him to be a *man of consideration*. Thus, being borne onward by the tide of fortune, says Le Page du Pratz, Ette-Actal became insolent, like an upstart that he was, and availing himself of the instructions he had received among the French, he went on cheating his countrymen without stint, and showed himself a most accomplished rogue.

On the day of the funeral, the French proceeded to the dwelling of the Great Sun, to pay him a ceremonial visit; and Stung Serpent's favorite wife, knowing that they were there, came to bid them a last adieu. She had brought her children with her, and she addressed them in these words in the presence of the French:—"The death of your father is a severe loss. He tarries for me to accompany him to the world of spirits, and I must not keep him waiting long. I am anxious to depart, because since my husband's death, I walk on this

earth with a heavy step. With regard to you, my children, you are very young, and you have before you a long path, through which you must journey with prudence in your minds, and boldness in your hearts, taking care not to tear your feet with the brambles of duplicity, and the sharp-edged flints of dishonesty. I leave to you the keys, bright as you see, and free from rust, of the inheritance of your father, and of my own worldly possessions. Take them: you will find our coffers full of corn. Never speak with an evil tongue of the French: walk in their path without deceit, as your father and myself have done: treat them, and love them as we have. Be true to them, and they will supply your wants:—if they do not, abstain from complaint, and wait until justice opens their hearts to your merits. They were the friends of your father; therefore, if they wrong you, let forgiveness tread on the heels of the offense. And you, French chiefs, continue to befriend the Natchez: be liberal and kind to them: do not be too harsh, and too exacting in your barter and exchanges with your red brothers, and look with the eye of the dove on the errors which they may commit.” Perceiving that one of the French was so moved, that tears came into his eyes, she said,—“Do not weep:—it is womanly—although you may well regret the loss of such friends as my husband and myself. Instead of weeping, let us feast together. So far, I have never tasted meat with the French, because it would not have been becoming in a woman: but I am at liberty to do so, now that I am going to the world of spirits.” And turning to her attendants: “Let victuals be brought plentifully,” she said, “Stung Serpent’s wife and the French chiefs must eat together, before parting forever.” The French were struck with admiration at the surprising firmness, the extraordinary elevation of



sentiments, the queen-like dignity of manner displayed by this woman, and they wondered at the infinite tact and skill with which she was contriving to secure for her children their protection and friendship.

The temple, the hut of the Stung Serpent, and that of the Great Sun, were situated in front of a public square, which was in the center of the village. On the day of the funeral, the French took their stand on the artificial mound on which the hut of the Great Sun was built; and from that elevated position they had a full view of all the ceremonies. The Great Sun did not make his appearance, and remained wrapped up in the privacy of grief. At the hour appointed for the obsequies, the master of the ceremonies, with a semi-crown of red feathers on his brows, presented himself at the door of the Great Sun. He held in his right hand a red pole in the shape of a bishop's cross, from the head of which hung down a garland of black feathers. The upper part of his body was painted red, with the exception of his arms; which signified that his hands were never dipped in blood. He wore from his waist to his knees, a sort of half tunic, which was ornamented with alternate rows of white and red feathers. After having taken the commands of the Great Sun for the ceremony, the grand master went to the dwelling of Stung Serpent, which he saluted with a howl, in token of respect, and he then shouted the death-cry, which was echoed back by the whole village. The corpse of Stung Serpent, carried on a litter by eight men, of whom six were the guardians of the temple, came out in state. The grand master of ceremonies took the lead, followed by the oldest warrior of the nation, who carried on a pole the chain of reeds which recorded the number of men killed in battle by Stung Serpent. In the other hand, he held a calumet of war, as a sign of



the princely dignity of the deceased. Then came the body :—after which, the victims. The whole train went three times round the dwelling of Stung Serpent, and then proceeded direct toward the temple, describing a series of small intersecting circles, so that if their steps had been imprinted on the ground, they would have formed to the eye something like a chain of rings, extending from the dwelling of Stung Serpent to the temple. Every time the carriers of Stung Serpent had completed one ring, and were entering into another, the man whom I have mentioned as having strangled his child, threw down its corpse, so that the dead body of Stung Serpent should pass over it, and picking it up again by one foot, he continued the same operation until the funeral train reached the temple. By this hellish deed the unnatural father became a member of the nobility.

When the procession arrived at the temple, the tragedy which had been rehearsed twice on the preceding day, was acted in earnest, and the victims were put to death according to the programme. The body of Stung Serpent was deposited inside of the temple on the right, and his two wives slept in the same tomb. *La Glorieuse*, or *the proud*, was buried outside of the temple, to the right, and the word-bearer to the left. The other bodies were transported to the villages to which they respectively belonged. To conclude the ceremony according to the ancient rites of the tribe, fire was set to the dwelling of Stung Serpent, and it was burnt to the ground.

The French wended their way back to Fort Rosalie, reflecting and commenting on the strange scenes to which they had stood witnesses. One of them, Philippe de Chamilly, a beardless officer, celebrated for the recklessness of his disposition, the sprightliness of his

conversation, the exuberance of his animal spirits, but who, under apparent thoughtlessness and the utmost carelessness of deportment, concealed steadiness of purpose, well-digested plans of ambition, and the keen-sighted, far-seeing sagacity of a shrewd and strong mind, had remained moody and silent. It was so foreign to his habits, that it struck his companions, who rallied him on his extraordinary taciturnity, and asked him whether he had been crossed by the apparition of Stung Serpent's ghost. "No," said he, "gentlemen; it would not have produced such a painful impression upon me as the daily demonstration of a fact which puzzles my philosophy. How is it that man never obeys the impulses of his heart without doing something which his reason reprobates, as calculated to interfere with his welfare, his safety, and prosperity? Although my assertion is not conducive to morality, and although I confess that it sounds like a libel on the divine goodness, yet, as I do not stand here in the pulpit of theology, or do not speak from the mountain as a lawgiver, I do affirm, much to my regret, that according to my short experience, a man who begins his career has to choose between these two guides—the heart and the head. They never agree; and one leads to ruin as surely as the other to success in this world, however different it may be after death. For instance, when we interfered to prevent that mahogany-looking block-head of a barbarian, the Great Sun, from butchering half of his people in honor of his dead brother, and persuaded him not to commit suicide, which would have been also a death-warrant for a good many of his subjects, we acted according to the dictates of our hearts. We have been sentimental and romantic, to be sure, but have we behaved with common sense? We lay our hands on our hearts, and we say with self-compla-

gency—what generous, noble, humane fellows we are! But what says reason, that sound little politician we have in the head? It cries out to us, ye are fools! and is it not true? Is it not our interest to destroy, or to weaken as much as we can, those untamable wild beasts, who have to this day so materially interfered with our purposes of colonization, and who may one day lap our blood like tigers, if they ever have a favorable opportunity? Which of us is simple enough to believe that those Indians do not see, with secret but deadly hostility, our gradual encroachments on their lands? Do you think that they do not feel that their existence and ours can not continue long side by side, and that one must, sooner or later, make way for the other. If this be the decree of fate, why not facilitate its execution, and thereby avert the dangers and bloodshed which may be the result of our maudlin generosity or bastard humanity, so suicidal for us, and so fruitless for those it was intended to benefit. What course then had we to pursue on this occasion? Why—a plain one—it was, in order to diminish the number of our enemies, to encourage those stupid savages in their nefarious practices, to stimulate their pride, and to show great admiration at the magnanimous courage with which they are ever ready to sacrifice themselves on the tombs of their chiefs. We ought to have assisted in tying the ropes round the necks of half of those red devils, and in making the other half pull the murderous strings, while we should have stood by enjoying the joke and cracking our sides with laughter. Such would have been the policy of Louis the XIth, a pretty wise statesman of ours, who said, that ‘the smell emanating from the corpse of a foe was the sweetest of perfumes.’ O, shame! This would have been cruel and barbarous! I do not deny it. But, finally, to achieve the destruc-

tion of those people must be the inevitable consequence of the position you have assumed toward them. A man, if he be not a fool, must be a logician in virtue, or in crime. If he makes up his mind to rob and to oppress, he ought, in self-defense, to take away life from the oppressed, when he can turn his victim to no better use. Mark the words of him whom you take for a thoughtless, inexperienced stripling. As we have acted with Christian charity, and *obeyed the heart*, we may be rewarded for it in the kingdom of bliss above; but as we have *disregarded the head*, and been politically foolish, we shall be punished and suffer for it on this side of the grave. So the conclusions of my speech keep tune with its premises. But a truce to my gravity—Fort Rosalie is in sight. Supper, thank God, a French supper—not an Indian one, must be ready. I cheerfully drop the soothsayer to be no more than a boon companion over a merry cup.” Four years had hardly elapsed, before the prediction was accomplished. The white flag was pulled down from Fort Rosalie by the hand of an Indian warrior, and the whole French colony at Natchez was visited with complete destruction.

The advanced state of the medical art, which is presumed always to keep pace with the other arts and sciences, may therefore be received as a criterion of the degree of civilization to which nations have arrived. If we judged of the Natchez by that test, we might be tempted to believe and to say, without much sarcastic exaggeration, that the French could hardly claim any superiority in that respect over those barbarians. For many diseases to which the Natchez were subject, their physicians were quite as skillful as the French, if not more so. If they were powerless against the small-pox, by which they were threatened to be annihilated, and which was a recent European importation

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against which, until lately, they had never felt the necessity of guarding themselves, they did not, it may be justly observed, show themselves more ignorant than our modern physicians, who, in spite of their profound studies, and of the written information which comes to them from every part of the world, and from the experience of so many centuries, are invariably bewildered and miserably impotent, whenever humanity is attacked by one of those unknown diseases which, from time to time, are so suddenly and so mysteriously generated. The Natchez understood the art of blood-letting and scarifying in many ways, not omitting the application of the moxa, just as well as any<sup>1</sup> Esculapius of the present day, although not exactly by the same process. The system of hydropathy was not unknown, and cold bathing and vapor-baths were much in practice. In provoking perspiration, in using frictions, in administering drastics, and in applying other devices of the healing art, they were not so inferior to our race as might at first be thought by those learned men who hold their diplomas from the medical faculties of London and Paris.

It may not be without interest to enumerate here a few of their remedies. Thus, in cases of diarrhea and dysentery, they used with much effect a kind of bread made with the pounded fruit of the persimmon-tree, which they dried up either in an oven or by exposure to the sun. They had discovered the balsam of the copal-tree to be an excellent febrifuge. First purging the patient, they administered to him ten or twelve drops of this balsam several times a day, and an hour or two before the patient had eaten any thing. If they were troubled with ulcers, wounds, sores, &c., they applied for several days on the diseased parts a poultice of the ground ivy, well pounded, and afterward they

washed and dressed those wounds, ulcers, &c. with the balsam of copal, which was also very powerful in the affections of the chest and bowels, in cases of obstructions, of relaxations, &c. &c. In fact, it was for the Indians a universal panacea, and like good wine, it is said to have gladdened the heart. Another febrifuge of great virtue and as efficacious as quinine, was the red grain of the magnolia. The grain of the wax-tree boiled in water gave an astringent beverage which produced all the good effects of ipecacuanha. For ordinary cuts or gashes, the root of the cotton-tree afforded them a precious remedy. If they suffered from the stomach, they took, as tea, an infusion of the leaves of the cassia berry-tree. If they had the tooth-ache, they chewed a piece of "*bois d'amourette*," or of the acacia, and the pain was gone; so that dentists would have starved among them. With the leaves of the elder and with hog's lard they relieved their pains, when proceeding from piles; and no ague could resist one or two purgatives, followed by a strong decoction of the *Liane barbue*, or bearded withwind.

When the Natchez wished to perspire, so as to cure a cold, or to re-establish the functions of the skin, they drank hot infusions of the China radix. It is said that an infusion of the root of the same plant was also used by them as a specific to prevent the hair from falling, or to make it grow again with more profusion than ever. I here mention the fact for the benefit of those who are threatened with baldness. The leaves of the China radix were likewise employed in the curing of wounds.

The Natchez were acquainted with the medicinal qualities of sassafras, sarsaparilla, and maiden-hair. But their most powerful sudorific was the plant called by the French *plat de bois*.

They possessed an antidote against the bite of the

rattlesnake. It consisted in chewing the onion or root of a plant which the Indians called oudla-coudlo-gouille, and the French *l'herbe à serpent à sonnettes*, or *rattlesnake plant*, which is a literal translation of the Indian appellation. After having chewed the onion, they applied the residue to the wound. The poison was promptly checked, and the patient recovered entirely in four or five hours. An application to the forehead of the pounded green leaves of the ground ivy cured every headache. The old colonists used to extract from it a salt, which they put in arquebusade water, and it was thought to be an infallible remedy for the megrim. Those Indians astonished the French by their rapid cures of the most dreadful wounds produced by fire-arms. One of their curative ingredients was the plant known to this day in Louisiana as the Choctaw root. They possessed the most invaluable secrets to cure the dropsy, the sciatica, and the fistula lachrymalis. I could name many other diseases which, if what is reported is to be taken as true, they could master better than if they had studied old Hippocrates. This sketch is sufficient, however, to show what proficiency those Indians had attained in the healing art, the most important of all to mankind. It certainly speaks much in favor of their powers of observation, of investigation, and of discrimination: that they should have arrived at discovering more than three hundred medical plants, of which the king's commissary, De la Chaise, sent a collection to France with a memoir written on the subject by Le Page du Pratz. The physicians ranked very high among the Natchez, and were looked upon as inspired. Those people believed, that for every disease the Great Spirit had provided a remedy in the shape of a plant, and that he never refused to point it out to the physician, when supplicated in the proper man-



ner. Hence, if they awarded the most liberal fees to the physician in cases of success, they frequently put him to death, when his patient did not recover, on the ground that it must have been his fault if he did not find out the curing remedy.

When the French became acquainted with that interesting nation, it is said it had much degenerated from its former state of power, population, and civilization. The Natchez were then thought to be in the last stage of decline, and doomed to approaching and inevitable destruction. They knew it, and crouched gloomily under that fatality which, in the days of antiquity, hung with such terrific perseverance over certain individuals, certain families, and even whole nations. A century had hardly elapsed, when the sacred fire being accidentally extinguished, the guardians concealed the fact to escape death, and relighted the altar with profane and ordinary fire. A short time after, the same accident happened in the other temple, and on its being discovered, fire was procured, according to the old custom, from the first temple. But it was *profane fire*; so that the nation was thus deprived of that celestial flame which their great lawgiver and first sovereign had brought down with him from the Sun. The sacrilegious guardian of the sacred fire, who had concealed the truth, being on his death-bed, and racked with remorse, made at last the awful confession of his guilt—a confession which sounded in the ears of the Natchez as their death-knell. From the day when they had lost the fire from the sun, calamities on calamities had rained down on their tribe; and although they had sought to remedy the evil, by taking fire from a tree struck and ignited by lightning, they felt that their prosperity was withering and fast dropping its yellow leaves, and that there would soon remain nothing but its naked and life-



less trunk to blacken and rot away under the wrath of heaven. Nothing could wipe away from their souls the belief that the entire annihilation of their race was at hand; and their tradition said that the guilty guardian, who had to answer for the destruction of a whole nation, was locked up by the Great Spirit in one of those large mounds which are to this day to be seen in the vicinity of the present city of Natchez. There he is doomed to languish forever, and to be eternally barred from entering the world of spirits, unless he can make fire with two dry sticks, which he is ever rubbing together with desperate eagerness. Now and then a light smoke issues from the sticks—the wretch rubs on with increased and lightning rapidity;—and just as a bright spark begins to shoot up, the sluices of his eyes open against his will, and pour out a deluge of tears, which drown the nascent fire. Thus he is condemned to a ceaseless work, and to periodical fits of hope and despair. It is Ixion's ever-rolling rock, or the bottomless tun of the Danaides.

The Choctaws occupied a very large territory between the Mississippi and the Tombecbee rivers, from the frontiers of the Colapissas and of the Biloxis, on the shores of lakes Pontchartrain and Borgne, up to the frontiers of the Natchez, of the Yazoos, and of the Chickasaws. They owned more than fifty important villages, and it was said that at one time, they could have brought into the field twenty-five thousand warriors. Chacta, Chatka, or Choctaw, spelling it according to the various pronunciations, means *charming voice* in the Indian dialect. It appears that the Choctaws had a great aptitude for music and singing. Hence the name that was given to them. Very little is known about their origin, although some writers pretend that they came from the province of Kamtschatka. It is

said that they suddenly made their appearance, and rapidly overran the whole country. That appearance was so spontaneous, that it seemed as if they had sprung up from the earth like mushrooms. With regard to their manners, their customs, and their degree of civilization, it is sufficient to say, that they had many characteristic traits in common with the other Indian nations. However, they were much inferior to the Natchez in many respects. They had more imperfect notions of the divinity, and were much more superstitious. They were proverbially filthy and stupid in the estimation of all who knew them, and they were exceedingly boastful, although notoriously less brave than any other of the red tribes.

What the Choctaws were most conspicuous for, was their hatred of falsehood and their love of truth. Tradition relates that one of their chiefs became so addicted to the vice of lying, that, in disgust, they drove him away from their territory. In the now parish of Orleans, back of Gentilly, there is a tract of land, in the shape of an isthmus, projecting itself into Lake Pontchartrain, not far from the Rigolets, and terminating in what is called "Pointe aux herbes," or *herb point*. It was there that the exiled Choctaw chief retired with his family and a few adherents, near a bayou which discharges itself into the lake. From that circumstance, this tract of land received, and still retains the appellation of "*Chef Menteur*," or "*Lying Chief*."

The Chickasaws ruled over a fertile region, which extended from the Mississippi to the Tombecbee, in the upper part of the state of Mississippi, and near the frontiers of the present state of Tennessee. They numbered from two to three thousand warriors, and were by far the most warlike of all the Louisiana tribes. They had numerous slaves, well-cultivated fields, and numerous

herds of cattle. They never deviated in their attachment to the English, and they became exceedingly troublesome to the French. With some shades of difference, they had, on the main, the invariable and well-known attributes of the Indian character. Therefore, to pursue the subject into further details would, perhaps, be running the danger of falling into the dullness of monotonous and uninteresting description. Suffice it to say, that they were the Spartans, as the Natchez were the Athenians, and the Choctaws the Boeotians of Louisiana.

## FOURTH LECTURE.

**TRANSFER OF THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT TO NEW ORLEANS—ITS POPULATION AND APPEARANCE IN 1724—BOISBRIANT, GOVERNOR AD INTERIM—BLACK CODE—EXPULSION OF THE JEWS—CATHOLIC RELIGION TO BE THE SOLE RELIGION OF THE LAND—PERIER APPOINTED GOVERNOR—LEAGUE OF ALL THE OFFICERS OF GOVERNMENT AGAINST DE LA CHAISE, THE KING'S COMMISSARY—HE TRIUMPHS OVER THEM ALL—REPUBLICANISM OF THE COLONISTS—THE URSULINE NUNS AND THE JESUITS—PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS MADE OR CONTEMPLATED BY GOVERNOR PERIER—CENSUS IN 1727—EXPENSES OF THE COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION—EDICT OF HENRY THE SECOND AGAINST UNMARRIED WOMEN—OTHER FACTS AND EVENTS FROM 1723 TO 1727—TRADITIONS ON THE MUSIC HEARD AT THE MOUTH OF PAS-SAGOULA RIVER, AND ON THE DATE TREE AT THE CORNER OF DAUPHINE AND ORLEANS STREETS.**

IN 1723, the seat of government was at last and definitively transferred to New Orleans, much to the satisfaction of Bienville. That city, now so populous and so flourishing, contained at that time about one hundred very humble buildings, and between two and three hundred souls. All the streets were drawn at right angles, dividing the town into sixty-six squares of three hundred feet each. The city thus presented a front on the river of eleven squares, by six in depth. The squares were divided into lots of sixty feet front on the street, with a depth varying from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty. The name of New Orleans was given to the city in compliment to the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France, and Chartres-street was called after the Duke of Chartres, son of the Regent:—Maine, Condé, Conti, Toulouse, and Bourbon streets were also named after the princes of the royal blood, such as the Prince of Conti, Duke of Maine,

Prince of Condé, Count of Toulouse, and Duke of Bourbon. One of the streets was honored with the name of Bienville, the founder of the city, and deservedly has that name been lately bestowed on one of the parishes of this state. The only establishments which then existed between New Orleans and Natchez, were those of Mezières and St. Reine,—a little below Point Coupé; that of Diron d'Artaguet, at Baton Rouge; that of Paris Duvernay, near Bayou Manchac; of the Marquis d'Ancenis, near Bayou Lafourche; of the Marquis d'Artagnac, at the Cannes Brulées, or Burnt Canes; of De Meuse, a little lower, and of the Brothers Chauvin, at Tchoupitoulas. With the exception of the Chauvins, these aristocratic possessors of the virgin soil of Louisiana were not destined to strike deep roots in it, and their names soon disappeared from the list of the landholders in the colony.

In that year, however, another settlement, which was to grow rapidly in importance, was made on that portion of the banks of the river which now forms the parishes of St. Charles and St. John the Baptist. Large tracts of land were conceded to those Germans, whom Law had sent from Alsatia, to settle on the twelve square miles of territory which had been granted to him on Arkansas River, by the India Company. When these German families were informed of the fate of Law, and saw themselves abandoned to their own resources in that distant part of the colony, they broke up their establishment, and descended the Mississippi in a body, with the intention of returning to their native country. But, fortunately, they were prevailed upon to settle at a distance of about thirty miles from New Orleans, on a section of the banks of the river, which, from that circumstance, drew the appellation of the *German Coast*, under which it was long known. Every Saturday, they

were seen floating down the river in small boats, to carry to the market of New Orleans the provisions which were the result of their industry. From this humble but decent origin, issued some of our most respectable citizens, and of our most wealthy sugar planters. They have, long ago, forgotten the German language, and adopted the French, but the names of some of them clearly indicate the blood that flows in their veins, although more than one name has been so Frenchified, as to appear of Gallic parentage. The *German Coast*, so poor and beggarly at first, became in time the producer and the receptacle of such wealth, that, a century after, it was called the *Gold Coast*, or *Côte d'or*.

In the very year when these industrious people came to reside at the *German Coast*, and before they could show what rich harvests could spring from the prolific soil of Louisiana, the colony suffered extremely from the want of provisions, and, in a dispatch of the 24th of January, the Superior Council informed the French government "that the colonists would absolutely starve, if the India Company did not send by every vessel an ample supply of salt meat." From 1699 to 1723, such representations, however incredible they may appear, had been made every year, and had forced the French government into heavy expenses, so that it is calculated in a memoir of that epoch, that the few individuals scattered over Louisiana had, at an average, cost annually to France, in provisions alone, about one hundred and fifty thousand livres. There must certainly have been much abuse and malversation at the bottom of this state of things, and it is evident that there was in the organization of the colony a defect, which, if it starved some, fattened others. Be it as it may, the existence of the colony was nothing but a pro-

longed agony. The principle of life seemed to be wanting in her.

Thus, the colonists in Louisiana, during the year 1723, were dragging along, sluggishly and miserably, a rickety sort of existence, when, on the 11th of September, there burst upon them a tremendous hurricane, which lasted three days. The church, the hospitals, and thirty houses in the modest little hamlet of New Orleans, were pulled down by the wind. Three ships that were in port were completely wrecked: the crops were destroyed: very few of the edifices on the embryo farms of the colonists could withstand the fury of the hurricane, and were swept away like chaff, or autumn leaves. The desolation was so widely spread, and so intensely felt, that the first impulse of the people in their despair was to quit the colony forever: and, no doubt, they would have executed their design, if they could have procured means of transportation. A company of infantry that had embarked at Biloxi for New Orleans, availed themselves of this favorable opportunity for escape, took possession of the vessel, and forced her captain to sail for Charleston, where they landed safely with their arms and baggage.

It frequently happens that both the excess of misery and of prosperity, has a tendency to develop the evil propensities of the human heart. It was, on this occasion, strikingly exemplified by the colonists, who, at all times, had been strongly addicted to gaming, but who now, seeking perhaps for artificial excitement, to lose the consciousness of their wretchedness, went on playing with such wanton recklessness at all kinds of games of chance, that the authorities found it necessary to interfere, and to prohibit with stringent penalties their indulging in this culpable and dangerous passion.

In spite of all the misfortunes which had befallen the

country, its agriculture had been developing itself to some extent, although checked by many obstacles. The number of negroes, or slaves, was gradually increasing, and, this year, it was determined by an ordinance, that the negroes introduced by the India Company from Africa, should be sold for 676 livres per head, on a credit of one, two, and three years, payable in rice and tobacco. The price of rice was fixed at 12 livres the barrel, and tobacco at 26 livres per hundred pounds. Wine was to be supplied to the colonists for 26 livres the cask, and brandy at 120 livres. Another ordinance fixed the value of the Spanish pistoles and dollars, which, from the proximity of the Spanish provinces, had become current in the colony.


The spiritual concerns of the colony were not neglected. Louisiana was divided into three grand ecclesiastical districts. The first was intrusted to the Capuchins, and extended from the mouth of the Mississippi to the Illinois. The Carmelites had jurisdiction over all that section of country which spread from the Alibamons to Mobile;—the Wabash and Illinois district was the lot of the Jesuits. Orders were given and provisions were made for the construction of churches and chapels, the colonists having complained of their being obliged, for want of proper places of worship, to assemble in the open air round wooden crosses erected in the fields, or public thoroughfares and roads.

The necessity of deepening the mouth of the Mississippi, had attracted the attention of the French government at the earliest period of the establishment of the colony, and the engineer Pauger made, in this year, 1723, a very interesting report on the practicability of arriving at this desired result. He represented that it was easy and not expensive to *fix* (fixer) or to control the current of the Mississippi, so as to make it subser-



vient to the plan of operating upon the sand-banks which obstructed the several mouths of the river, and so as to give admittance to the largest ships, whatever might be the depth of water they drew; that, if necessary, a fine artificial harbor with quays might be created at the Balize, with the numerous resources which the nature of the locality offered, and that it might be effectually protected by such fortifications as he indicated. He recommended to shut up all the mouths of the river, except one, in order to force a greater volume of water into the remaining channel, which would, consequently, acquire more depth; and he calculated that the increased velocity and power of the current would sweep away the whole of the mud or sand-bank which barred the entrance of the Mississippi. He suggested that the immense quantity of drift-wood which it carried down, might be secured and fastened to its banks to give them greater solidity, and to narrow the bed of the river. He also stated that, for the execution of the works he described, the government had at hand inexhaustible cypress forests, furnishing an incorruptible kind of wood, which, without much expense, might be used to any extent and with incalculable advantages and results.

In 1849, when I write these lines, there is no such thing as a French colony in North America, but there is in it a gigantic empire composed of thirty sovereign states, having in the aggregate a population of twenty-five millions of souls, and a commerce more extensive than that of any nation in the world except Great Britain. The limits of that empire, known under the appellation of the United States of America, extend from the frozen banks of the St. Lawrence to the sun-burnt hills of New Mexico and the golden Californian shores of the Pacific. The thousands of miles of country



which the Mississippi waters in its course belong exclusively to this mighty people, and, consequently, the deepening of the mouths of the Mississippi, and the giving a free access to what has justly been called *an inland sea*, on the shores of which stand such cities as New Orleans and St. Louis, in a boundless region where several millions of the human race are already domiciliated, and where countless millions will reside in the future, would be one of the most important national works which the government of the United States could undertake; and yet it is no more thought of than if it was not recommended by the eloquence of its own magnitude, and if it had not repeatedly been brought before Congress by more than one legislative resolution of the State of Louisiana. True it is, that it would not cost perhaps one hundred thousand dollars a year, to have forty feet of water at the mouths of the Mississippi, through which pass annually so many millions of importation and exportation in every sort of goods and produce;—that it would stimulate and increase commerce, by the affording of new facilities and the diminishing of obstacles, risks, and expenses to ship-owners and merchants; that it would be investing money that would return the highest interest;—that it would procure to the people the precious advantage of studding the banks of the Mississippi with navy yards, at points teeming with infinite resources, far from the guns of hostile fleets;—and that it would make of that mighty stream a harbor, an asylum, and a home for our winged monarchs of the ocean. True it is, that the expenses attending the accomplishment of such a vast object, would be microscopical when compared with the results of every kind which would be attained, and that large sums have been lavishly spent in more favored states, because they were of more political importance. But, long ago,

would this much-needed improvement have been carried into execution, which, for more than a century, by its immense importance, its easy feasibility, and the imperious necessity which demands it, has struck with the force of self-demonstration every mind that has bestowed the slightest attention on the subject, if Louisiana had been blessed, like New York, with a large congressional representation. Let us hope that the time will come, when, to secure the success of some move on the political chess-board of the day, and to gain the complement of certain votes required to fill up the scale of power, that great national work shall be done, which was delayed so long when it was demanded only by the wants of commerce, the sense of justice, and the voice of public interest.

A treaty of peace having been concluded between Spain and France, Pensacola, which had been taken by the French in 1719, was restored to the Spaniards. This peace dissipated the fears and feelings of insecurity which existed in the colony from the neighborhood of Cuba and of the other Spanish possessions on the continent; and a successful campaign which the Choctaws had undertaken against the Chickasaws, at the instigation of the French, gave such a crushing blow to this warlike tribe, as to secure the country for a while against their depredations. Bienville said, in one of his dispatches, "The Choctaws, whom I have set in motion against the Chickasaws, have destroyed entirely three villages of this ferocious nation, which disturbed our commerce on the river. They have raised about four hundred scalps, and made one hundred prisoners. Considering this state of things, it is a most important advantage which we have obtained—the more so, that it has not cost one drop of French blood, through the care which I took of opposing those barbarians to one

another. Their self-destruction, operated in this manner, is the sole efficacious means of insuring tranquillity to the colony." Bienville also wrote that there were thirteen feet water on the bar at the Balize, and that he was actively engaged in fortifying that pass, and in preparing lodgings for a small garrison.

The Chickasaws had hardly been disabled from doing further mischief, when Bienville was informed that the Natchez, in consequence of some difficulties which had sprung up between them and the French, had murdered two or three of the latter and plundered their habitations. He immediately went up the river with an army of seven hundred men, and having obtained the sacrifice of some heads, in atonement for those of the French who had been killed, he smoked the calumet of peace with the Indians, and only three days after his arrival at Natchez, he had the satisfaction of speeding back to New Orleans, after having put an end to hostilities which threatened a protracted and a dangerous war.

But the Indians were not the worst enemies he had to cope with. He had active and ever-plotting adversaries in the colony, and no vessel returned to France without carrying back heavy accusations against the Governor of Louisiana. Hubert, the king's commissary, was one of the foremost, and kept repeating to the French government that Louisiana was the finest country in the world; that if it had a fault, it was that its virgin soil was too rich, which was injurious to agriculture, the first harvests being too luxuriant to be productive; but that if the colony did not prosper more, it was owing to the mal-administration of Bienville, and to his favoritism for his numerous relations and allies. The fact is, that the colony, as for the past, was divided into two factions, and the quarrels of its officers and administrators waxed

so hot and so acrimonious, that almost every day, anonymous and defamatory writings were stuck up at every street corner in New Orleans, and satirical compositions were clandestinely circulated, which produced much irritation and many duels. The Superior Council had to publish an ordinance on the subject, and to inflict heavy penalties on those who participated in the composition and publication of these libels.

On the 16th of January, 1724, Bienville had the mortification of receiving a dispatch from the French government, by which he was called to France to answer the charges brought against him. Perhaps to soften the blow, his cousin Boisbriant was appointed governor *ad interim*. This was the second time that his enemies had succeeded against him, and forced him to visit France in self-defense. But before leaving the colony, he published, in the month of March of the year 1724, a *Black Code*, containing all the legislation applicable to slaves. It remained in force until after the cession of Louisiana by Spain to France, and by France to the United States, and some of its provisions have been incorporated into the Black Code which is now the law of the land. As it embodies the views, feelings, and legislation of our ancestors more than a century ago, on a subject which has been daily growing in importance, I have deemed it of sufficient interest to lay the whole of it before the public.\* Its first and its third articles were, it must be confessed, strangely irrelevant to the matter in consideration. Thus, the first declared that the Jews were forever expelled from the colony; and the third, that the Roman Catholic religion was the only religious creed which would be tolerated in Louisiana. By what concatenation of causes or of ideas, these provisions concerning the su-

\* See the Appendix.

premacy of the Roman Catholic religion and the expulsion of the Jews came to be inserted into the Black Code, it is difficult to imagine.

I transcribe here a short royal ordinance, which shows the nature of the morality of the country at the time, and which demonstrates the state of distraction and of bitter conflict with which the colonists were afflicted, instead of working harmoniously for their mutual welfare.

“Royal ordinance concerning the breaking up of seals, and the violation of the secrecy of letters.

“Whereas the directors of the India Company have represented to us, that in our province of Louisiana many breaches of trust are committed with regard to the letters and packages which are received from Europe, and those which are destined to be transported from said colony to our kingdom; that some evil-minded persons, either through malicious intentions or a guilty curiosity, intercept said letters and packages, and after having opened them, make public what they contain, whereby quarrels and animosities are produced in our colony, we have deemed it expedient to stop the course of an abuse so prejudicial to commerce and so repugnant to good faith: and to this effect, we have declared and ordained that all persons, officers, clerks, inhabitants, or others, on being convicted of having detained or intercepted one or several letters or packages, shall be sentenced, to wit: the officers or clerks, to a fine of five hundred livres, to be deprived of their office or offices, and to be forever incapable of holding any other under our government; and that the inhabitants (habitants) and others shall be sentenced to the iron collar (carcan), and to a fine of five hundred livres.”

The affairs of the company, far from improving, were rapidly becoming worse. Louisiana was losing ground

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in the estimation of the French government, and it was thought necessary to diminish the expenses of such an unprofitable possession. Thus, by an ordinance of the 7th of September, the military forces of the colony were reduced from twenty companies to ten, commanded by Marigny de Mandeville, De la Tour, D'Artaguet, Du Tisé, Lamarque, Le Blanc, Des Liettes, Marchand de Courcelles, Renault d'Hauterive, and Pradel. Such being the economical views of the French government with regard to Louisiana, the excellent observations and plans presented by the engineer Pauger, concerning the improvements to be made at the mouth of the Mississippi, could not be carried even into partial execution; but as a reward for his labors, he was appointed member of the Superior Council.

The colony had always greatly suffered from the want of surveyors. The grantees of lands experienced much difficulty and long delays to be put in possession of their grants, and frequently, these surveys being made by persons who were incapable, and not legally empowered to officiate, much confusion and uncertainty ensued, and promised future litigation when the country should be more thickly settled. To remedy this evil, two brothers, named Lassus, were sent to Louisiana with full powers to act as engineers in the name of the company.

One of the curses of the colony was the constant fluctuation of its monetary circulation. Not only its paper currency underwent rapid depreciation as soon as a new one succeeded that which fell into discredit, but the company, for the most nefarious jobbing purposes, used to change, by repeated edicts, the standard of the Spanish dollars and pistoles, which were the chief metallic currency of the country. Thus, by an edict of the



23d of February of the preceding year, the company had suddenly raised the value of the dollar from 4 livres to 7 livres 10 centimes; and twelve months after, on the 26th of February, 1724, the pistole was reduced from 30 to 28 livres, and the dollar from 7 livres 10 centimes to 7 livres. On the 2d of May, there was another reduction for the dollar from 7 livres to 5 livres 12 centimes, and for the pistole, from 28 to 22 livres 8 centimes. On the 30th of October, there came a further reduction. Thus, from 22 livres 8 centimes, the pistole was brought down to 18 livres, and the dollar, from 5 livres 12 centimes to 4 livres 10 centimes. It would be tedious to go into all the details of these financial operations, and to investigate their real causes. It is evident that there must have been at the bottom of them some dark fraud, greedy corruption, and thieving speculation, which enriched some individuals at the expense of the sheepish multitude. To give an idea of the perturbation which was produced in the affairs of the colony, it is sufficient to state that, in the course of two years, there was, by successive arbitrary ordinances, a rise and fall of nearly fifty per cent. in the value of the metallic currency of the country. An indescribable confusion was the consequence of such measures. The pecuniary situation of every colonist was changed; the ruin was almost general, but some large fortunes sprung up from the vast wreck. Comments are unnecessary, when facts speak so loudly and so distinctly. The mere statement of these facts suffices to show what was the spirit which presided over the administration of that miserable colony. Under such an incubus, how could it prosper without a miracle, when suffering from the violation of all the laws of nature, of common sense, of civilization, and of political economy?

In 1724, the white population of Louisiana, says La



Harpe, amounted to about 1700 souls, and the black population to 3300. If La Harpe's statement be true, it shows an astonishing diminution of the white population, which, in 1721, was computed at 5400. There were in the colony, 1100 cows, 300 bulls, 200 horses and mares, 100 sheep, 100 goats, some hogs, and a considerable number of domestic fowls of every kind. In New Orleans and its vicinity, there were about 1000 souls, including the troops, and the persons employed by the government.

This year, 1724, was made remarkable by the promulgation of a law for the protection of domestic animals, and by its Draconic severity. Thus, the king, at the request of the Superior Council of the colony, issued a royal edict, declaring that the voluntary killing or maiming of a horse, or of a horned animal, by any one but the owner, should be punishable with death, and that any person who, without leave from a competent authority, should kill his own horse, his own cow, and sheep, or their young ones, if of the female sex, should pay a fine of 300 livres.

The enacting of such a law was no doubt prompted by the necessity of preserving against wanton destruction, animals which were so useful to the colony, and which it was extremely important to multiply. But as the human race was quite as scarce in the colony, and of a nobler and more precious nature, it seems that some scale of proportion should have been observed between the degrees of punishment to be inflicted for the killing of an ox, or of a man, and that the bipeds and quadrupeds should not have been assimilated under the same ægis of protection. What a wonderful change has taken place in our legislation, in our manners and customs, in the whole state of the country, and in its very bones and sinews since 1724! This change is

so great, that we can hardly admit the reality of the evidence that, only a little better than a century ago, one might have been broken on the wheel, or decapitated in Louisiana, for having maimed or wounded a horse or a cow. It shows that blue-laws were not confined altogether to the soil of Connecticut.

On his arrival in France, Bienville laid his defense, in 1725, before the French government. He represented that he had honorably served the king for thirty-four years, during the greater part of which he had acted as the governor, or one of the chief officers of Louisiana:—that as an officer of the Navy, he had served seven years, and gone through seven campaigns at sea:—that during these seven campaigns, he had been present at all the sea-fights of his brother Iberville, on the coasts of New England, of Newfoundland, and in the bay of Hudson, and among other engagements, at the one which took place between one single French ship of 42 guns, commanded by Iberville, against three English ships, of which one was of 54 guns, and two of 42, when, after a struggle of five hours, Iberville sunk the fifty-four, took one of the 42, and dismasted the other, which escaped under the protection of the dark shades of night; in which fight, he, Bienville, was dangerously wounded in the head. He further represented, that it was he, who, in 1699, jointly with his brother Iberville, had discovered the mouth of the Mississippi, and established a colony in Louisiana; that, for twenty-seven consecutive years, he had devoted himself exclusively to the colonization of that province; that he had sacrificed in favor of this public spirited enterprise the brilliant career which was open for him in his majesty's navy, in which many members of his family had distinguished themselves, seven of his brothers having died naval officers; that his father had

died on the battle-field, in the service of his country ; that there still remained in the navy three of his brothers : De Longueil, governor of Montreal, in Canada, De Sérigny, captain of a ship of the line, and De Chateaugué, naval ensign. He then reviewed what he had done since he arrived in Louisiana, the unceasing hardships and difficulties of every sort it had been his lot to struggle against,—the causes which excited the jealousy and hostility of his adversaries ; and he labored to prove that all his acts had been in conformity with the laws, with his instructions, with the interest of the colony, and of the king's service, and that it was to his unremitted exertions and devotion, that the colony was indebted for the continuation of its existence. Bernard de la Harpe, who, in his *historical journal*, warmly supports Bienville against his accusers, says pithily, that the best proof that Bienville had always been more mindful of the colony's interest and welfare than of his own, was, that during the twenty-seven years he had resided in the colony, and wielded power, he had not acquired in property more than 60,000 livres worth (or \$12,000), which was more than could be said of his traducers.

But if Bienville had implacable enemies, he had friends, blood relations, and allies, whose fidelity and active zeal were a compensation equal to the hostility from which he had to suffer. One of them, De Noyan, his nephew, presented to the Superior Council a petition, in which he stated, that he wished to disprove an assertion which had been advanced by his uncle's enemies, who had assured the French government that the Indian nations, having been oppressed by Bienville, were rejoiced at his departure from Louisiana. The Superior Council acceded to the prayer of the petition, and De Noyan brought before them deputations from

the Oumas, Tunicas, Natchez, Choctaws, and other tribes, who declared that Bienville had always been their best friend, and that, during his absence, their hearts would ever be clad in mourning. Nevertheless, Bienville, in spite of his own exertions, and of those of his friends, was dismissed from office, and Périer was appointed governor in his place on the 9th of August, 1726. The success of Bienville's enemies was so complete, that Chateaugué, his brother, who had long been acting as "*Lieutenant de Roi*," or lieutenant-governor in the colony, was also removed, and that the two Noyans, both his nephews, one a captain, and the other an ensign in the army, were broken, and the order was given to send them to France. The object of these measures, besides the gratification of private malice, was to destroy the influence of Bienville, to sweep away all the obstacles of a foreseen opposition from the path of his successor, and to make level ground for the new administration.

This change, and the other modifications which were expected in the administration, produced considerable perturbation, ill-blood, and fears, in the colony. The excitement was increased by the anticipation of a war, and the proclamation of Boisbriant, the governor ad interim, and De la Chaise, the king's commissary, which invited all the colonists to carry to the king's warehouses at New Orleans and Mobile, all the ammunition and provisions they could command, to provide for the contingencies of a war likely to break out between Spain and England, and in which France would be called to take a part, in virtue of her treaty of alliance with Spain.

It will be recollected that De la Chaise had been sent by the India Company, in 1723, with Du Saunoy, to exercise inquisitorial powers over the affairs of Louisiana,

to take informations on the conduct of all the officers and administrators of the colony, and to report thereon to the government. Du Saunoy having died shortly after his arrival, De la Chaise had remained clothed with all the authority of the joint commission. As soon as he entered upon his duties, the old intestine war had immediately ceased by mutual consent between the officers, clerks, agents of the colonial administration, and they had leagued themselves against the common enemy—against the spy whom the government had set *in terrorem* over them all. De la Chaise soon found himself in a hornet's nest, and met fierce opposition in every thing, and from every quarter. He was a nephew of the celebrated Jesuit, Father de la Chaise, the confessor to Louis the XIVth, and of patrician birth, the ancient feudal castle of his family, the *Chateau d'Aix*, being situated among the mountains of the province of Forez, in France. His father was the son of George d'Aix, Seigneur de la Chaise, who was distinguished for his military services, and had married Renée de Rochefort, daughter of one of the noblest houses of the province. Members of the De la Chaise family continued to occupy high rank in the army, and in the king's household, and one of them, during the regency of the Duke of Orleans, died a lieutenant-general. He had acquired reputation for his uncompromising integrity, and his unflinching attachment to duty, but, says the Duke of St. Simon, in his memoirs, he was so deficient in intellect, that he frequently met with unlucky accidents, in his military career.

De la Chaise, the king's commissary in Louisiana, was not gifted with a superior intellect; but he was a solid square block of honesty, who neither deviated to the right nor to the left from the path of duty, and who, possessing a considerable share of energy, moved stoutly

onward in the accomplishment of his mission, regardless of persons and of consequences. The never-ceasing repose of his handsome features was an unmistakable indication of the unruffled serenity of his soul: and the dignity of his person, the measured propriety of his deportment and actions were such, that it checked in others the ebullition of passion, forced discussion to be courteous, and anger itself to be respectful. With the blandest urbanity, but with unwavering firmness, he called every one to account, and the opposition, which he goaded into fury by his steadiness of purpose, and his unsparing investigations, became such, that the government thought it necessary to act with vigor. Boisbriant, the governor ad interim, Perrault, Perry, the engineer Pauger, the attorney-general Fleuriau, all members of the Superior Council, were censured with severity by the government. Moreover, Governor Boisbriant, Bienville's cousin, was summoned to France, to justify his acts: Perrault, Fazende, and Perry, members of the council, were dismissed from office: Fleuriau, the attorney-general, was invited to throw up his commission, and the office itself was suppressed for the moment. They had the mortification to receive the imperative order to appear respectfully before De la Chaise, and the new governor, Périer, or before whomsoever these dignitaries might choose to designate, and then to account to them for all their official acts. After that, Perrault and Perry were to be transported to France. With regard to Fazende, the other councillor, he was permitted to remain in Louisiana as a private citizen. Through the influence of Boisbriant, the governor ad interim, who was violently opposed to De la Chaise, a spirit of insubordination having infected the troops themselves, the king had issued an ordinance, on the 20th of November, to prohibit all assemblies of

officers. It was a complete revolution in miniature, but these were thought to be mighty events in the liliputian colony of Louisiana.

Thus, De la Chaise and Périer remained the supreme masters in Louisiana. The India Company, thinking it good policy that Périer should have a personal interest in the prosperity of the colony, and anxious to secure his zealous co-operation, even if it were on selfish grounds only, granted him, over and above his regular salary as governor, a concession of ten acres of land, fronting on the river, with the ordinary depth, and decreed that he should receive the donation of eight negroes a year, as long as he should retain his office.

The India Company gave to Périer the minutest instructions, to serve as rules for his administration. They informed him that they expected he should keep up the best understanding with De la Chaise, the king's commissary, whose integrity, zeal, and intelligence were well known to the company, and that there should be no jealousy and no clashing of authority between them; that from the sad experience of the past, they had come to the conclusion that power should be divided in the colony between two persons only, each one responsible for his acts in his respective department; that one should be the executive officer and the military commander of the colony, and the other should have the supervision of its police, its commerce, and its judicial administration; that they should remain completely independent of each other, in order to prevent the dissensions and quarrels which had hitherto been so fatal to the prosperity of the country; that he, Governor Périer, and the commissary, De la Chaise, would find, in the company's instructions, their powers and functions clearly defined and kept distinctly apart; that De la Chaise having made many enemies in consequence of his zeal for the



interests of the company, Governor Périer was required to back and to support him with all the means which would be in his hands; and that, in concert with this colleague in authority, he was expected to take all the measures necessary to punish, according to their deserts, those who had opposed the exercise of the authority conferred upon the king's commissary.

One of the articles of the instructions ran thus:—“Whereas it is maintained that the diseases which prevail in New Orleans during the summer, proceed from the want of air and from the city being smothered by the neighboring woods, which press so close around it, it shall be the care of M. Périer to have them cut down, as far as Lake Pontchartrain.” This paragraph shows two things:—1. That, at that remote time, the summer was a sickly season in New Orleans, as it is to this day; and 2. That to make it more healthy, the government was, as far back as 1726, struck with the necessity of an improvement which, for many years past, has in vain been urged upon the public authorities of New Orleans. To procure to this city a free and pure ventilation from Lake Pontchartrain, there remains to be removed only a thin curtain of wood, which might soon be withdrawn; and there being no other impediment to prevent a mutual exchange of breezes between the Mississippi and the lake, gentle drafts of invigorating air would daily sweep through our streets, and make of New Orleans, during the summer, the safest and most agreeable urban residence in the Union. When it should be once known that New Orleans is as much blessed with health as any other part of these United States, its rapid aggrandizement would be almost without limits, and it would, with the advantages it possesses, become at once the pride and the wonder of the American continent. In 1844, under the admin-



istration of Governor Mouton, this enlightened chief magistrate of the state of Louisiana proposed to the mayor of the city, to put at his disposal from eighty to one hundred black convicts, sentenced to hard labor, on condition that they should be employed by the municipal councils of New Orleans, in cutting down the forest which lies between the lake and New Orleans, and on condition that, during that time, they should be fed and clothed at the expense of the city. This liberal offer was not accepted for some futile causes, and a very important public improvement was indefinitely delayed. But he who studies some of the designs of Providence, as they are stamped on the map of the world, can see, however feeble his vision may be, that it is not in the power of the apathy, the stupidity, or the malice of man, materially to affect the destinies which are in store for the noble city now rising so proudly on the bank of the mighty father of rivers in the Egypt of the New World. Time will do all that is necessary—time! that great destroyer and beautifier of things!

"Hæc igitur formam crescendo mutat, et olim  
Immensi caput orbis erit. Sic dicere vates.

OVID.

In another article of the instructions, the company impressed upon Périer's mind the importance of his visiting, as soon as possible after his arrival in Louisiana, the powerful tribe of the Natchez, in order to become well acquainted with their dispositions, and the nature of their relations with the neighboring French settlement, to which it was the intention of the company to give as full a development as it was susceptible of. He was informed that the Natchez had three important villages in close contiguity with the French settlement; which circumstance had been and was ex-

pected to be the cause of incessant misunderstandings and quarrels; and that it was the desire of the company that he should look into this state of things, and that, if he should be of opinion, after a thorough investigation, that there was danger in keeping so close together two antagonistic races, then to tender to the Natchez chiefs, presents sufficiently persuasive to induce them to remove farther. These instructions, which, no doubt, became known to the French settlers, and leaked out among the Indians, and the feelings and acts to which they must have given rise, were probably one of the main causes that produced the horrible tragedy which marked with letters of blood the annals of Louisiana in 1729.

The new governor, Périer, had, when accepting his office, undertaken a task which, to be performed with credit to himself and to the India Company, required capacities of mind and soul of no inferior order; for, he had to contend with difficulties, for which mediocrity was no match. To appreciate his position, it is sufficient to read the description which Drouot de Valdeterre, who had commanded at Dauphine Island and Biloxi, gives of the colony in 1726.

“The inhabitants of this country,” said he, “whose establishment in it is of such recent date, not being governed in the name of his majesty, but in that of the company, have become republicans in their thoughts, feelings, and manners, and they consider themselves as free from the allegiance due to a lawful sovereign. The troops are without discipline and subordination, without arms and ammunition, most of the time, without clothing, and they are frequently obliged to seek for their food among the Indian tribes. There are no forts for their protection; no places of refuge for them in cases of attack. The guns and other implements of

war are buried in sand and abandoned; the warehouses are unroofed; the merchandise, goods, and provisions are damaged or completely spoiled; the company as well as the colonists are plundered without mercy and restraint; revolts and desertions among the troops are authorized and sanctioned; incendiaries who, for the purpose of pillage, commit to the flames whole camps, posts, settlements, and warehouses, remain unpunished; prisoners of war are forced to become sailors in the service of the company, and by culpable negligence or connivance they are allowed to run away with ships loaded with merchandise; other vessels are willfully stranded or wrecked, and their cargoes are lost to their owners; forgers, robbers, and murderers are secure of impunity. In short, this is a country which, to the shame of France be it said, is without religion, without justice, without discipline, without order, and without police." What a picture! It wants no finishing stroke.

In this energetic enumeration of the imperfections of the colony at the time, there is one thing which is deserving of notice. It is the innate spirit of republicanism which stuck to it from its origin: a spirit, of which Governor Cadillac complained so bitterly in 1717, and which, in 1726, was not much more to the taste of Drouot de Valdeterre.

It must be confessed that the company itself was the first, in some instances, to give bad examples by the violation of contracts and of the laws of morality and justice. Thus, on the 31st of October, the Council of State, at the instigation of the company, issued an ordinance decreeing that all creditors should accept in satisfaction of their claims, and that all holders of promissory notes and letters of credit should receive in payment of those obligations (any contrary stipulations

notwithstanding) the copper currency which had been introduced in the colony, and for the value affixed to it, instead of Spanish dollars or other Spanish coin. Any person violating this ordinance was declared to be guilty of speculation or extortion, sentenced to pay a fine of three hundred livres, one half of which for the benefit of the informer, and the other for the relief of the charity hospital, and further to be whipped and branded by the public executioner. The Spanish dollars or coin paid in violation of this edict were confiscated on behalf of the government.

Nothing could have justified this violent interference with private contracts; and it seems to us, modified as we are by the political atmosphere we live in, that those who framed and issued the ordinance we have mentioned, were much more deserving of the hangman's whip and brand than those who, in conformity with their pledged faith in contracts which were lawful at the time they were made, would have disregarded and disobeyed such retrospective and barbarous legislation.

Beyond this act of arbitrary and unjust legislation, nothing else marked the close of the year 1726, which had winged its flight over the colony without having dropped from its pinions one feather which Louisiana might have added to her stores of acquisitions and prosperity. For her there had been no progress. Time and the world had stood still.

In 1727, some Ursuline nuns and some Jesuits, in conformity with a contract, which, in the preceding year, they had passed with the India Company, came to Louisiana, where they were to reside permanently. The Ursulines were seven in number, and were to take charge of the charity hospital in New Orleans. According to previous stipulations, they were transported at the cost of the company with four servants, and they

had received each, before their departure, as a gratuity, the sum of five hundred livres. They were immediately put in possession of the hospital, in which they were to reside until a more convenient dwelling should be built up for them. The company was to concede to the hospital a lot of ground measuring eight acres, fronting on the Mississippi by the usual depth of forty. The object of this concession was the establishment of a *plantation*, capable of supplying the wants of the Ursulines, and of affording to them a sufficient remuneration for their services in the hospital. Those eight acres were to be located as near New Orleans as possible. Each of the nuns was to receive six hundred livres a year, until their plantation should be in full cultivation, or during five years after they should have been furnished by the company with eight negroes, on the ordinary conditions on which they were sold to the colonists. It was expressly stipulated, that if the nuns ceased to serve in the hospital as agreed upon, they would forfeit their plantation and the immovables attached to the hospital, and would retain only the negroes and other movables.

An edifice, which is still in existence, was constructed for their use on Condé-street, between Barracks and Hospital streets. They took possession of it in 1730, when it was completed, and they continued to occupy it until 1824; when they moved to a more splendid and more spacious convent, which they had caused to be built, three miles below the city, on the bank of the river. After the State House had been burnt in New Orleans, the Legislature sat in the old convent, and in 1831, its sacred walls, one century after they had pealed for the first time with holy anthems, and had heard soft prayers whispered to the sweet Virgin Mary, were converted to purposes of legislation, and resounded

with fierce oratorical debates. It has since resumed a character more consonant with its original destination, and has become the bishop's palace.

Such is the humble origin of one of the wealthiest religious corporations of the state. The Ursulines have long ceased to be connected with the charity hospital, and have established a convent for the education of females. Heaven has ever after favored them with uninterrupted prosperity, and so far, has spared them those trials and vicissitudes which are the common lot of the human race. In a country where all the laws counteract the permanent accumulation of wealth in private hands, and also where lay corporations of every sort invariably run into debt and end in bankruptcy, the history of these Ursuline nuns is a remarkable demonstration of the vitality, and of the spirit of preservation and of acquisition inherent to religious Catholic associations. It is undeniable that, to husband the terrestrial resources of the world, and to make the most of them, no individuals nor set of people are to be compared with those who deal in religious spirituality, and whose minds are fraught with *thoughts celestial*. Parched deserts, where it seemed that none but the salamander could live, have smiled at the command of monks, and have become the delightful habitations of man. There, stupendous buildings have been erected in the very bosom of sterility, refreshing waters have gushed from the burning sand, luxuriant gardens have sprung into existence, the hot breeze has been made sweet with perfumes, and the gorgeous display of opulence has astonished the pilgrim or the inquisitive traveler, in places which looked as if consecrated by nature to solitude and to famine. On how many craggy sides of desolate mountains, where the goat itself could hardly find scanty food, have comfortable human abodes been

raised, and flourishing institutions been established under the magic spell of religious association! Religious association! It gives even to woman the strength of a giant. There is in it consolidation, duration, infinite power, and almost ubiquity of influence. Truly, it is no transient bauble, as so many of our political or other worldly institutions, but it is something to study and to admire. Its granite organization inspires me with a respect which discourages censure, and I feel little disposed to analyze the good or the evil it has produced, and to indulge in a philosophical examination of its bearings on the destinies of nations, and in a prophetic anticipation of its future doings. To pyramids, the grandeur of which awes my sight, I bow with that innate love I feel in my soul for the stupendous, without enquiring, or caring perhaps, whether harvests profitable to mankind, or rank weeds, will grow within reach of their lengthened shadows.

These reflections lead me by an easy transition to the Jesuits, who landed in Louisiana at the same time with the Ursulines. The Superior of the company of the Louisiana Jesuits was to reside in New Orleans, but could not exercise therein any ecclesiastical functions, without the permission of the Superior of the Capuchins, under whose spiritual jurisdiction New Orleans happened to be placed. The Jesuits had been transported to the colony at the cost of the company; before their departure, and as a gratuity, each one received 150 livres; during the first two years of their residence in Louisiana, they were to be paid severally at the rate of 800 livres annually, and, afterward, that salary was to be reduced to 600 livres. A concession of eight acres of land, fronting on the river, with the usual depth, was made to them in the neighborhood of New Orleans, and they long dwelt on a *plantation*, a little above



Canal-street, in that part of the city which is now called the second municipality. A house and chapel were constructed for them; and they soon became as powerful in Louisiana, as they are destined to be wherever they may have a footing. Thus New Orleans was handsomely provided with spiritual protection, being flanked, on the left, with the Ursulines, and on the right, with the Jesuits.

In the beginning of 1727, the spot where now stands New Orleans, not being protected by a levee, was subject to annual inundations, and presented no better aspect than that of a vast sink or sewer. The waters of the Mississippi, and of Lake Pontchartrain, met at a ridge of high land, which, by their common deposits, they had formed between Bayou St. John and New Orleans, and which was since called the *Lepers' bluff*. The whole city was surrounded by a large ditch, and fenced in with sharp stakes wedged close together. For the purposes of draining, a ditch ran along the four sides of every square of the city, and every lot in every square was also ditched all round, causing New Orleans to look very much like a microscopic caricature of Venice. Mosquitoes buzzed, and enormous frogs croaked incessantly in concert with other indescribable sounds; tall reeds, and grass of every variety, grew in the streets and in the yards, so as to interrupt all communication, and offered a safe retreat, and places of concealment to venomous reptiles, wild beasts, and malefactors, who, protected by these impenetrable jungles, committed with impunity all sorts of evil deeds. It provoked a proclamation from Rossard, the inspector of police, who complained bitterly of the *overstretched obstinacy* with which, in spite of repeated admonitions, the inhabitants of New Orleans persisted in abstaining from removing such nuisances, and therefore



he threatened them with condign punishment. It is pleasing to the imagination, to compare the past with the present, the hay standards of primitive Rome with the gold eagles which spread their wings in front of the legions of Cæsar.

Governor Périer signalized the beginning of his administration by some improvements of an important nature. On the 15th of November, he had completed in front of New Orleans a levee, of eighteen hundred yards in length, and so broad that its summit measured eighteen feet in width. This same levee, although considerably reduced in its proportions, he caused to be continued eighteen miles on both sides of the city, above and below. He announced to the company, that he would soon undertake to cut a canal from New Orleans to Bayou St. John, in order to open a communication with the sea through the lakes, and he mentioned the arrangements which he had made with the inhabitants in relation to the negroes they were to furnish for the execution of this work, which was actually begun, but to which subsequent events put a stop. Thus it is seen that the plan of the canal which now bears the name of Carondelet, did not originate with that Spanish governor.

The English, being at war with the Spaniards, were intriguing among the Indians, to set them against their enemies, and at their instigation, the Talapouches had besieged Pensacola. But Governor Périer having sent them word that, if they did not retire, he would cause them to be attacked by the Choctaws, they obeyed his summons. He also gave to the Spaniards all the indirect and secret aid that he could, and he devoted much time and intrigues, to exciting a feeling of hostility among all the Indian nations against the English. Running up the Mississippi, he put an end to several

puny wars which existed between small Indian tribes from the Arkansas to the Balize, so that during the year 1727, an almost unprecedented tranquillity prevailed in the colony. He caused a census to be made of the negroes, and found that population amounting to 2600 souls: the whites hardly exceeded that number. Insignificant as this infant colony was, its expenses of administration, this year, rose to 453,728 livres, which, considering the comparative value of the precious metals, was at least equivalent to three times that sum in our days.

On the 29th of July, the Council of State in France, for reasons unknown to us, but which we must suppose to have been weighty at the time, promulgated a decree, putting in force in Louisiana an old edict of Henry II, which made it a capital crime for unmarried women to conceal their pregnancy. This legislative act was received in the colony with exceedingly marked signs of displeasure; and it is to be hoped that, on account of its severity, it never was carried into execution if any case ever called for its application.

During that summer, Governor Périer, leaving New Orleans, visited the first settlements of the French at the Bay of St. Louis, at Biloxi, Pascagoula, and Mobile. While among the Pascagoulas, or *bread-eaters*, he was invited to go to the mouth of the river of that name, to listen to the mysterious music which floats on the waters, particularly on a calm, moonlight night, and which, to this day, excites the wonder of visitors. It seems to issue from caverns or grottoes in the bed of the river, and sometimes ascends from the water under the very keel of the boat which contains the inquisitive traveler, whose ear it strikes as the distant concert of a thousand Eolian harps. On the banks of the river, close by the spot where the music is heard,

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tradition says that there existed a tribe different in color and in other peculiarities from the rest of the Indians. Their ancestors had originally emerged from the sea, where they were born, and were of a light complexion. They were a gentle, gay, inoffensive race, living chiefly on oysters and fish, and they passed their time in festivals and rejoicings. They had a temple in which they adored a mermaid. Every night when the moon was visible, they gathered round the beautifully carved figure of the mermaid, and with instruments of strange shape, worshiped that idol with such soul-stirring music, as had never before blessed human ears.

One day, a short time after the destruction of Manvila, or Mobile, in 1539, by Soto and his companions, there appeared among them a white man, with a long gray beard, flowing garments, and a large cross in his right hand. He drew from his bosom a book, which he kissed reverentially, and he began to explain to them what was contained in that *sacred little casket*. Tradition does not say how he came suddenly to acquire the language of those people, when he attempted to communicate to them the solemn truths of the gospel. It must have been by the operation of that faith which, we are authoritatively told, will remove mountains. Be it as it may, the holy man, in the course of a few months, was proceeding with much success in his pious undertaking, and the work of conversion was going on bravely, when his purposes were defeated by an awful prodigy.

One night, when the moon at her zenith poured on heaven and earth, with more profusion than usual, a flood of light angelic, at the solemn hour of twelve, when all in nature was repose and silence, there came, on a sudden, a rushing on the surface of the river, as if the still air had been flapped into a whirlwind by myr-

iads of invisible wings sweeping onward. The placid water was immediately convulsed; uttering a deep groan, it rolled several times from one bank to the other with rapid oscillations, and then gathered itself up into a towering column of foaming waves, on the top of which stood a mermaid, looking with magnetic eyes that could draw almost every thing to her, and singing with a voice which fascinated into madness. The Indians and the priest, their new guest, rushed to the bank of the river to contemplate this supernatural spectacle. When she saw them, the mermaid tuned her tones into still more bewitching melody, and kept chanting a sort of mystic song, with this often repeated ditty:—

“Come to me, come to me, children of the sea,  
Neither bell, book, nor cross shall win ye from your queen.”

The Indians listened with growing ecstasy, and one of them plunged into the river to rise no more. The rest, men, women, and children, followed in quick succession, moved, as it were, with the same irresistible impulse. When the last of the race disappeared, a wild laugh of exultation was heard; down returned the river to its bed with the roar of a cataract, and the whole scene seemed to have been but a dream. Ever since that time, is heard occasionally the distant music which has excited so much attention and investigation. The other Indian tribes of the neighborhood have always thought that it was their musical brethren, who still keep up their revels at the bottom of the river, in the palace of the mermaid. Tradition further relates that the poor priest died in an agony of grief, and that he attributed this awful event, and this victory of the powers of darkness, to his not having been in a perfect state of grace when he attempted the conversion of those infi-

dels. It is believed also that he said on his death-bed, that those deluded pagan souls would be redeemed from their bondage and sent to the kingdom of heaven, if on a Christmas night, at twelve of the clock, when the moon shall happen to be at her meridian, a priest should dare to come alone to that musical spot, in a boat propelled by himself, and should drop a crucifix into the water. But, alas! if this be ever done, neither the holy man nor the boat are to be seen again by mortal eyes. So far, the attempt has not been made; sceptic minds have sneered, but no one has been found bold enough to try the experiment.

Since I am dealing in traditionary lore, I may as well close this lecture with another legend, which, when I was a boy, thirty years ago, a man of eighty related to me, as having been handed down to him by his father.

In a lot situated at the corner of Orleans and Dauphine streets, in the city of New Orleans, there is a tree which nobody looks at without curiosity and without wondering how it came there. For a long time, it was the only one of its kind known in the state, and from its isolated position, it has always been cursed with sterility. It reminds one of the warm climes of Africa or Asia, and wears the aspect of a stranger of distinction driven from his native country. Indeed, with its sharp and thin foliage, sighing mournfully under the blast of one of our November northern winds, it looks as sorrowful as an exile. Its enormous trunk is nothing but an agglomeration of knots and bumps, which each passing year seems to have deposited there as a mark of age, and as a protection against the blows of time and of the world. Inquire for its origin, and every one will tell you that it has stood there from time immemorial. A sort of vague but impressive mystery is attached to it, and it is as superstitiously respected as one

of the old oaks of Dodona. Bold would be the axe that should strike the first blow at that foreign patriarch; and if it were prostrated to the ground by a profane hand, what native of the city would not mourn over its fall, and brand the act as an unnatural and criminal deed? So, long live the *date-tree* of Orleans-street—that time-honored descendant of Asiatic ancestors!

In the beginning of 1727, a French vessel of war landed at New Orleans a man of haughty mien, who wore the Turkish dress, and whose whole attendance was a single servant. He was received by the governor with the highest distinction, and was conducted by him to a small but comfortable house with a pretty garden, then existing at the corner of Orleans and Dauphine streets, and which, from the circumstance of its being so distant from other dwellings, might have been called a rural retreat, although situated in the limits of the city. There, the stranger, who was understood to be a prisoner of state, lived in the greatest seclusion; and although neither he nor his attendant could be guilty of indiscretion, because none understood their language, and although Governor Périer severely rebuked the slightest inquiry, yet it seemed to be the settled conviction in Louisiana, that the mysterious stranger was a brother of the Sultan, or some great personage of the Ottoman empire, who had fled from the anger of the viceroy of Mohammed, and who had taken refuge in France. The Sultan had peremptorily demanded the fugitive, and the French government, thinking it derogatory to its dignity to comply with that request, but at the same time not wishing to expose its friendly relations with the Moslem monarch, and perhaps desiring, for political purposes, to keep in hostage the important guest it had in its hands, had recourse to the expedient of answering, that he had fled to Louisiana,

which was so distant a country that it might be looked upon as the grave, where, as it was suggested, the fugitive might be suffered to wait in peace for actual death, without danger or offense to the Sultan. Whether this story be true or not is now a matter of so little consequence, that it would not repay the trouble of a strict historical investigation.

The year 1727 was drawing to its close, when on a dark, stormy night, the howling and barking of the numerous dogs in the streets of New Orleans were observed to be fiercer than usual, and some of that class of individuals who pretend to know every thing, declared that, by the vivid flashes of the lightning, they had seen, swiftly and stealthily gliding toward the residence of the *unknown*, a body of men who wore the scowling appearance of malefactors and ministers of blood. There afterward came also a report, that a piratical-looking Turkish vessel had been hovering a few days previous in the bay of Barataria. Be it as it may, on the next morning the house of the stranger was deserted. There were no traces of mortal struggle to be seen; but in the garden, the earth had been dug, and *there* was the unmistakable indication of a recent grave. Soon, however, all doubts were removed by the finding of an inscription in Arabic characters, engraved on a marble tablet, which was subsequently sent to France. It ran thus: "The justice of heaven is satisfied, and the date-tree shall grow on the traitor's tomb. The sublime Emperor of the faithful, the supporter of the faith, the omnipotent master and Sultan of the world, has redeemed his vow. God is great, and Mohammed is his prophet. Allah!" Some time after this event, a foreign-looking tree was seen to peep out of the spot where a corpse must have been deposited in that stormy night, when the rage of the elements yielded to the

pitiless fury of man, and it thus explained in some degree this part of the inscription, "the date-tree shall grow on the traitor's grave."

Who was *he*, or what had *he* done, who had provoked such relentless and far-seeking revenge? Ask Nemesis, or—at that hour when evil spirits are allowed to roam over the earth, and magical invocations are made—go, and interrogate *the tree of the dead*.



## FIFTH LECTURE.

**ARRIVAL OF THE CASKET GIRLS—ROYAL ORDINANCE RELATIVE TO THE CONCESSIONS OF LANDS—MANNER OF SETTLING THE SUCCESSION OF FRENCHMEN MARRIED TO INDIAN WOMEN—FRENCH HUSBANDS—INDIAN WIVES—HISTORY OF MADAME DUBOIS, AN INDIAN SQUAW—CONSPIRACY OF THE NATCHEZ AGAINST THE FRENCH—MASSACRE OF THE FRENCH AT NATCHEZ IN 1729—MASSACRE OF THE FRENCH AT THE YAZOO SETTLEMENT IN 1730—ATTACK OF THE NATCHEZ AGAINST THE FRENCH SETTLEMENT AT NATCHITOCHES—THEY ARE BEATEN BY ST. DENIS—THE FRENCH AND CHOCTAWS ATTACK THE NATCHEZ—DARING AND DEATH OF NAVARRE AND OF SOME OF HIS COMPANIONS—SIEGE OF THE NATCHEZ FORTS—FLIGHT OF THE NATCHEZ—CRUEL TREATMENT OF NATCHEZ PRISONERS BY GOVERNOR PÉRIER—DESPERATION OF THE NATCHEZ—THE CHICKASAWS GRANT AN ASYLUM TO THE NATCHEZ—CONSPIRACY OF THE BANBARA NEGROES—LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL OFFICERS IN THE COLONY IN 1730.**

In the beginning of 1728, there came a vessel of the company with a considerable number of young girls, who had not been taken, like their predecessors, from houses of correction. The company had given to each of them a casket containing some articles of dress. From that circumstance, they became known in the colony under the nickname of the “filles à la cassette,” or “the casket girls.” The Ursulines were requested to take care of them until they should be provided with suitable husbands. Subsequently, it became a matter of importance in the colony to derive one’s origin from the *casket girls*, rather than from the *correction girls*. What distinctions, however slim they may be, will not be eagerly sought after by human pride?

With great propriety, Governor Périer turned his attention to the encouragement of the agriculture of the country, and by words and deeds excited the colo-

nists to draw out of the fertile soil on which they dwelt, the wealth which was concealed within its bosom. Rice, tobacco, and indigo were cultivated with success by the two thousand six hundred negroes who had been imported, and the fig and orange trees, lately introduced, were thriving everywhere, and ornamenting almost every garden. Land was rising in value, and as surveys had been carelessly made, limits fixed in a very loose or arbitrary manner, and titles of property mostly incomplete from negligence, indifference, or from some other cause, a royal ordinance, in order to check anticipated lawsuits, and to prevent future confusion, was issued on the 10th of August, 1728, and declared:

“That all the orders of concession addressed, before the 30th of December, 1723, by the India Company in France, to its directors in Louisiana, if not as yet presented to said directors for confirmation, or if not as yet followed by the possession and improvement stipulated in the acts of concession, were null and void.”

In obedience to this ordinance, every landholder was bound to show his titles to the Superior Council, within a specified time, and to designate the quantity of land he claimed and had cultivated, under the penalty of a fine of 1000 livres, and of the loss of the conceded land, which, in that case, should escheat to the company.

Every concession of land situated on both sides of the Mississippi, below Manchac, was to be reduced to twenty acres, fronting on the river, except it should be proved that a greater number of acres was under cultivation.

The depth of every concession was to vary from between one hundred acres and one hundred and twenty acres, according to the nature of the locality.

The company was authorized to raise a tax of one

cent for every acre, cultivated or not, and of five livres for every slave. The revenue arising from this tax was to be consecrated to the building of churches and hospitals.

The expenses of the colonial administration had continued to be very great, and had amounted, this year, to 486,051 livres.

The year 1729 dawned on the colony under favorable auspices. Through the harmonious and joint administration of Périer and De la Chaise, tranquillity had been established in the country, which, for the first time, was free from the evils produced by the jealousies and quarrels of the governor, and of the king's commissaries. Unchecked in the exercise of the high authority with which he was clothed, De la Chaise turned his attention to the jurisprudence of the country, and to the settling of disputes and juridical conflicts among the inhabitants. A case presented itself, in which he used his influence much to the satisfaction of the colonists. Father de la Vente, the bigoted curate of Mobile, had demanded that the French be authorized by the government to take Indian wives. This demand had been opposed by the governor, Lamothe Cadillac, and the king's commissary, Duclos. The government had neither sanctioned, nor actually prohibited such marriages, but had merely recommended that they be discouraged as much as possible. However, the church had thought differently, and consecrated a great many alliances of that kind. It was, no doubt, very correct, in a moral point of view, but it gave rise to legal difficulties. Thus, on the death of French husbands, their Indian wives claimed, according to the customs of the Viscounty of Paris, half of their succession: and if they died without issue, the property acquired during marriage went to the Indian heirs of the wife in prefer-

ance to the French heirs of the husband. These Indian heirs frequently ran away with what was left by the deceased, and it was next to an impossibility to force them to pay the debts of the succession, and to subject them to the observance of those formalities required by, and inherent to, the laws of succession. The French were therefore clamorous to prevent Indian wives from enjoying the benefit of *the custom of Paris*, and they urged that, to deviate from it in such cases, would be nothing but an act of justice and of sound policy, on the ground that what had been acquired by the French should remain to the French, and not go to the huts of barbarians, who were their enemies. Taking these complaints into consideration, and on the recommendation of De la Chaise, the Superior Council decreed that, for the future, on the death of a Frenchman married to an Indian woman, the property left by the deceased should be administered, if there were minor children, by a tutor, and if there were none, by a curator to vacant estates, who should pay annually to the widow one third of the revenue of the estate, provided that this pension should cease in case she returned to dwell among her tribe. The expenses of preserving from deterioration, and of keeping up the goods, chattels, and movable or immovable property of the succession, were to be at the charge of the children, or of the other heirs.

The fact is, that the conduct of the Indian wives toward their French husbands was not such as to entitle them to much respect or sympathy, and adultery was one of the frequent offenses of which they became guilty. When brought into the society of the white race, it seems that they lost those qualities which they possessed when pursuing the savage and primitive life of their ancestors, and on the other hand, they ac-

quired none of the virtues and blandishments of civilization. One instance in support of this assertion, among many others which might be cited, will be sufficient.

In the district of the Illinois, in 1720, the French had built a fort, and were living in good intelligence with the Indians, when the commander, or governor of the district, no doubt with the intention of producing a deep impression on those barbarians by the sight of the number, the resources, and the power of the French nation, undertook to induce some of them to pay a visit to the *Great French village across the big salt lake*. He talked so much about the marvelous things to be seen in his own country, that he persuaded twelve of the Indians to follow him to France. One of them was the daughter of the chief of the Illinois, and she is said to have been the paramour of the governor. That officer, leaving the command of his fort to his lieutenant, descended the Mississippi with his twelve Indian attendants, and a sergeant named Dubois, and arrived safely at New Orleans, where they embarked for France. There, they were conducted to Versailles, introduced at court, and presented to the king, as a sample of his red subjects in Louisiana. They amused the *élite* of the aristocracy, by hunting a deer in the *Bois de Boulogne*, according to the Indian fashion; and the women, particularly the daughter of the chief of the Illinois, who was beautiful, were caressed and petted for a week by duchesses and such high-born dames. They even appeared on the floor of the Italian opera in Paris, to perform Indian dances, and they had the honor of being the flitting wonder of a few days. The Indian princess was converted to Christianity, baptized in the splendid gothic cathedral of Notre Dame with great pomp and ceremony, and then married to Sergeant Dubois, who,

in consideration of this distinguished alliance, was raised by the king to the rank of captain, and commander of the Illinois District. She received handsome presents from the ladies of the court, and from the king himself. Her companions were not forgotten, and came in for their share of petticoats, shining blue coats, and cocked hats lined with gold. They were, of course, very much pleased with their reception by their white allies, and after having seen every thing, and having been exhibited to every body, they left Paris and Versailles, to return to their distant home, and departed in high glee for Lorient, where they took ship. With regard to the officer who had brought them to France, he remained in his native country, gave up forever all thoughts of returning to Louisiana and to Indian paramours, and married a rich widow, who, like Desdemona, had *loved him for the dangers he had passed*, among

"Cannibals that each other eat,  
The anthropophagi, and men whose heads  
Do grow beneath their shoulders."

The Indians, when they arrived at New Orleans, were entertained in that city at the expense of the India Company. They were also supplied with boats and rowers, and with an escort of soldiers, and thus transported back to the Illinois. Great were the rejoicings among those people, who had long thought they had lost some of their most important and most cherished members. Dubois took possession of the fort as the commander of the district, and there lived for a short time in the full enjoyment of power and peace. His wife, however, used to pay to her relations among her tribe, more frequent visits than he liked. One day, she helped her people to surprise the fort, and Dubois and the whole garrison were butchered without mercy. Madame Du-

bois then renounced Christianity, stripped herself of her cumbersome French dress, and returned to the worship of her old idols, to her early habits, and to the savage life which, it seemed, had lost in her eyes none of its primitive attractions. So much for the attempt to tame lions and tigers!

Périer, on his arrival in the colony, had been struck with its defenseless situation, and with the necessity of fortifying the distant settlements. He had made frequent remonstrances on the subject to the company, and had solicited an additional force of two or three hundred men. But his fears were treated as chimerical, and his motives misunderstood. It was thought that, by asking for more troops, his intention was to give more importance to his command, and to engage in some war in order to display military talents. But subsequent events justified Périer's apprehensions.

In 1729, the French settlement at Natchez was under the command of an officer called Chopart, Chépart, or Etcheparre. He was rapacious, haughty, and tyrannical, and by repeated acts of oppression and injustice, had made himself odious to those over whom he ruled. One day, he ordered a subordinate officer to be put in irons without cause. The officer, who was no other than Dumont, well known for the interesting historical memoirs he has left on Louisiana, having succeeded in escaping from his prison, fled to New Orleans, and laid his complaint before Governor Périer. Chopart was summoned to head-quarters, tried by his peers, and found guilty of an abuse of power. He would even have been broken, if pressing and powerful solicitors had not obtained his pardon from Governor Périer. But he was reinstated in his office, only on condition that he should change his conduct, and treat those under him with more justice and mildness.

Having received a salutary lesson, Chopart, on his return to Natchez, acted toward the white population with more reserve, but made up for it by treating the Indians with insolence and cruelty. Acquainted, no doubt, with the instructions given to P rier by the company, and in which the wish was expressed that the Natchez, to prevent further collisions, should be induced, if possible, to remove farther off, he acted accordingly, and heaped every sort of outrage and insult upon that devoted race, to force them to abandon the spot they had occupied for so many centuries. Seeing that by such means he did not obtain the object he had in view, he went still further. One day, he summoned to his presence the Great Sun, and told that chief that he, Chopart, had received orders from Governor P rier to take possession of the beautiful village of the *White Apple*, which was situated six miles from the French fort, and there to establish a plantation, and to construct certain buildings; wherefore it was necessary that the Natchez should remove to some other place, which they might occupy without prejudice to the French. This intimation was given in an abrupt manner, without the slightest attempt at conciliation. It was the tone of an eastern despot, speaking to a slave. The Great Sun looked at Chopart with a composed but inquisitive eye, and said:—"Surely, my white brother does not speak in earnest, but wishes only to try the fortitude of the red man. Does not my white brother know that the Natchez have lived in that village for more years than there are hairs in the twisted lock which hangs from the top of my head to my waist?" "Foolish barbarian!" exclaimed the French officer, with kindling ire and fierce contempt. "What ties of brotherhood can there be between thy race and mine? I have no explanations or apology to give to such as



thou. It is sufficient for thee to know that I obey superior orders—obey mine!”

In spite of the habitual command of an Indian over his muscles and features, and his aversion to any demonstration of his inward feelings, when such language fell on the ears of the Great Sun, his eyes flashed and his breast heaved up with emotion, but he replied with a calm voice: “Brother, we have not been used to such treatment. So far, the French have taken nothing from us by force. What they possess, we gave freely, or they purchased. Wishing to live in peace with thy nation, I say to thee: We have other lands that we can spare—take them!—can we do more? But, as to the village of the White Apple, leave it untouched in the hands of the Natchez. There we have a temple, and there the bones of our ancestors have slept since we came to dwell on the bank of the father of rivers.” Chopart listened to this touching appeal with an ironical smile, and said:—“I will not bandy fine sentiments with thee, romantic Indian; but mark my word, and remember that I shall keep it. Toward the latter part of November, I expect a galley from New Orleans. If, when she arrives, the village of the White Apple is not delivered up to me, I will send thee bound hand and foot to our great chief in our great village down the river. Thou seest that I make short work of it. Go.” “Good, I see,” replied the Indian; “and I go home to lay thy communication before the old and wise men of the nation.”

When all the magnates of the Natchez met in council, at the call of their sovereign, every one of them knew beforehand the subject of their future deliberations. The words of the French chief had been spoken publicly, and had spread like wildfire, causing the utmost indignation, and rousing the slumbering hatred which

had been pent up in more than one breast against the insolent intruders. But when what had happened was officially communicated by the Great Sun, there was in the assembly a fresh outburst of indignation, which was hushed up and gave place to profound silence, when the chief of the White Apple was seen to rise. Next to the Great Sun, he was the most influential man among the Natchez, on account of his exploits as a warrior, and of his eloquence as an orator. Majestically rising, he stood up, buried as it were in profound meditation, while all eyes were riveted on his noble form. After the lapse of a few minutes, he thus began:—

“Children of the Sun, old traditions and oracles have long informed us of the approaching doom that awaits our nation. We have had ancestors, but we are destined to be the ancestors of no human beings. If those traditions and oracles are true; nay, if portentous signs and appearances are to be believed, soon this nation, which once was so powerful, will cease to exist. We have been gradually shrinking up into a small and weak population, and our once broad domains, which it required so many moons to travel over, have fast escaped from our grasp, as water oozes through the fingers by which it is clutched. Diseases, frequent human sacrifices in honor of our dead chiefs, and long wars with some of the red tribes by which we are surrounded, had contributed to diminish our numbers, when, on a sudden, there came upon us this hostile race, the pale-faced warriors, who had been announced to us as our future destroyers. Bowing to the decree of the Great Spirit, and yielding to the superior powers which we recognized in these strange men, we tried to conciliate their good-will, and we granted them land and all sorts of supplies. What has been the consequence? Every year they have become more greedy, exacting, and over-

bearing Every year, between them and our people, quarrels have sprung up, in which blood was shed, and for which we had to make atonement, sometimes at the cost of the heads of our most illustrious warriors. The vic'nage of these men has become at last an intolerable curse upon us. With their merchandise and new wares, they have introduced new wants among our people, corrupted their morals, and changed particularly the manners of our young men, who now despise the rugged virtues of their forefathers to ape the frivolity of the French, and have become effeminate and worthless drunkards. As to our women, their heads have been turned by the silver tongue and the gaudy plumage of these loose strangers. What is the result? Why, that debauchery has crept into every bosom, and that the very blood of the Natchez is tainted in its source. Which of us is sure now of the affections and of the purity of his daughter or of his wife, when yonder thieves are prowling about our dwellings? Before the French settled near us, we were in the full enjoyment of the greatest of blessings—boundless freedom! What are we now?—hardly better than slaves!—are we not controlled in every thing, and dare we move without asking leave from that haughty chief who sits in yonder fort with the white flag? Are they not stripping us every day of the poor remains of our ancient liberty? Do they not frequently strike us with clubs, as they do with the black slaves? Depend upon it, they will soon seize upon us, put us in irons, force us to work for them in their fields, tie us to posts and apply the lash to our backs, as they do with the black faces. Shall we wait for that moment, or shall we not prefer to die before, but satiated with blood, and surfeited with revenge?"

Here a low and half-suppressed growl, forcing its way,

as it were, through clenched teeth, was heard running through that grim-visaged assembly, and some of the young warriors, giving way to their excitement, started up from their seats, and uttering a fierce shout, shook their tomahawks with wild fury. The orator looked round with a grave and rebuking glance, as if disapproving the undignified and premature display of feelings by which he had been interrupted, and waving his hand as if he commanded silence, he thus continued:—

“Have we not met now to deliberate on a peremptory command which the French have ventured to send to us? Have we not before us a sample of their present audacity, and the harbinger of their future daring? Have they not ordered us to relinquish to them the harvests which grow around us, and which are the results of our labors? Do they not order us away from the village of the White Apple, to shift for ourselves in the woods like wild beasts? Will they not soon drive us out of the other villages? What then will become of the tombs of our ancestors and of the cradles of our children? The white faces will run their plows over the bones of our dead, and put their cattle in our temples. Shall we consent to such profanation? Are we not strong enough to prevent it? We are. Shall we wait until the French become so numerous that we shall not be able to resist oppression? For my part, I say—no! We can destroy them all, if we choose, and if we act with proper courage and skill. Should we be doomed in our turn to perish all, and leave none of our race behind, let it not be without having struck a blow worthy of the children of the Sun. Let us not be immolated like bleating sheep, without resistance, but let us die like warriors, after having done a deed that will make the name of the Natchez famous among all the red tribes, however distant they may be from our na-

tive hills. I pause . . . . . to put this question: shall we yield our birth-place, our beautiful valleys, our temples, our sacred mounds, the tombs of our ancestors, and every thing that we hold dear, without a struggle? and shall we only utter impotent wailings like babes, when deprived of their playthings? Shall we move away like a nation of cowardly beggars, to steal from some weaker tribe the land that we shall want for our support? War or submission!—which do you choose? I wait for an answer.”

A simultaneous war-cry announced the spontaneous decision of the assembly to the orator, who thus resumed his address, with a grim smile of exultation.

“I see with pride that the contact of the French has not yet turned the Natchez into mean-spirited women. Now, listen to what I propose for the full and secure accomplishment of our design. We have always been reputed to have more mind than the other red nations; let us show it on this occasion. All the Indians—the Yazoos, the Chickasaws, the Choctaws, and others, have equally suffered like us from French insolence, and must be tired of their oppressive domination. Let us invite them to forget our past hostilities, to join with us in a holy alliance against the common enemy, and to free our father-land with one blow from the hated presence of strangers. Let ambassadors be forthwith sent to them, to lay our proposition before their councils of wise men. If they adopt it, let bundles, made up of an equal number of small sticks, be remitted to them, and let one stick be removed every day. The last remaining one will designate the day when this combined attack shall be made against the French, over the whole face of the country. Thus assailed by surprise, and isolated, cut off from the reciprocal succor which the several settlements would give to each other

if this plan be not adopted, the French must succumb under the vastly superior numbers that we shall bring against them. But, for the successful execution of this combination, we must gain time, and we must humbly entreat our august sovereign, the Great Sun, here present, to enter into negotiations with the hungry French wolf, the crocodile-hearted chief in yonder fort, to obtain, by dint of presents, that our removal be postponed, and that the delay be sufficiently long to ripen to maturity the good fruit of this day's deliberations. The chief of the White Apple, children of the Sun, has but one more recommendation to make, with a view to secure the success of our enterprise: that is, the observation of secrecy. You know that women are never to be trusted in any thing, much less with designs of importance. They are fickle and indiscreet, and they can no more keep a secret than a sieve will hold water. Besides, many of them love the French, and would certainly betray us. Therefore, let us swear before we separate, to keep our lips sealed, and not to say one word which might give to our women the slightest intimation of what we intend. The chief of the White Apple has done, children of the Sun, and waits for better advice."

The orator sat down amid a universal hum of applause, and all his propositions were accepted by acclamation.

The next day, the Great Sun called at the French fort, and representing to Chopart how ill prepared they were to move so suddenly, without having selected the place whither they could transport their effects, he obtained that the fulfillment of the order of expulsion should be postponed until the latter part of December, provided that the Natchez should pay to Chopart, in the interval, a contribution consisting of one barrel of corn, and a certain quantity of fowls, furs, and bear's

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oil, for each and every cabin of the White Apple village: which was a pretty considerable and valuable contribution, considering that there were eighty cabins in the village. The Great Sun and the French officer parted, both equally satisfied with the bargain they had made. The one had gratified his appetite for gain, and the other thought that he had secured his revenge.

After some time, the ambassadors of the Natchez returned, and brought back the information, that all the Indian nations to which they had been sent, had eagerly embraced the proposition made to them, and had entered into the league against the French, whom they would attack on the day fixed. Thus, the whole colony was threatened with total destruction, through the imprudence of an avaricious and tyrannical subaltern officer. It is evident that the Indians could, at any time, if united, have crushed the French without much effort, if we believe a statement made by Diron d'Artaquette, in a dispatch dated on the 9th of December, 1728, and in which he estimated that the Indians settled on the banks of the principal rivers of Louisiana could set on foot seventeen thousand men, and said that, with regard to the inland nations, one of them alone, the nation of the Choctaws, could bring into the field ten thousand warriors.

All the movements which I have related, had not taken place among the Natchez without exciting the suspicions of the women; and with that eager curiosity which is said to characterize their sex, they went to work to discover what was in the wind. The Great Sun, whose intended suicide, on the death of his brother Stung Serpent, had been prevented by the French, had since died, and had been succeeded by a young Sun, his nephew, the same who had struggled with the Great Sun, to take possession of the gun with



which that prince wanted to blow out his brains. The mother of the new sovereign was a woman distinguished for her intellect. She had a great deal of partiality for the French, and it was even reported that her son was the offspring of an amour she had carried on with a French officer. Disquieted by the observations she had made, she inquired of her son what was the motive of the recent meetings of the nobles and of the embassies which had sped in every direction. He answered her, that the object of these missions was merely to renew the alliances of the Natchez with the other nations, and to smoke with them the calumet of peace. She appeared satisfied with the answer: but when, on the return of the ambassadors, she saw that instead of receiving them publicly, as was the old custom, the nobles met in secret session to listen to their communication, which was not afterward made known to the people, all her fears revived, and she resolved to penetrate into such mysterious proceedings.

She requested the Great Sun to accompany her to a village called the *Corn Village*, where she pretended to have a female relation extremely sick, who required her assistance. On her son complying with her wish, she departed with him, and took the least frequented path, under the pretext that it was the most shady, and the most agreeable. When they arrived at a spot which the princess, from its solitary appearance, thought the most free from unexpected intrusion, and therefore most favorable for the accomplishment of her design, she pleaded fatigue, and begged her son to sit down by her. She then addressed him thus:

“The weariness of my old limbs is not the only cause why I stop here, my son. I wished for an opportunity to speak to thee in private, and without fear of interruption. Open thy ears to admit my words into thy



brain, because they are weighty. I have always taught thee to avoid a lie as the most disgraceful of sins, and I have always told thee that a liar did not deserve to be looked upon as a man, much less as a warrior. But were a Sun, and particularly the chief of the Suns, to tell a lie, he would fall even beneath the contempt of women. How can I doubt, therefore, but that thou wilt speak the truth to thy mother? Are not all the Suns bound together with fraternal ties, whether they be males or females? Are not their interests the same? Are they not but one family? And if there be some shadow of an excuse for not trusting one or two young and giddy-headed female Suns, does the same reason exist for the aged and trust-worthy, and, above all, for the gray-haired mother of the sovereign of the Natchez? I have discovered that there is a secret at work in the bosom of the Suns; and yet that secret is kept concealed from me, as if my lips had been cut wide apart, and could no longer be sealed! Do I deserve such treatment? Does it not reflect shame and disgrace on thee? The contempt shown to a mother taints the son through skin, flesh, and bones. Dost thou know me to be vile, and capable of betraying thee and my tribe? Thou dost not dare to harbor the thought that I can intentionally commit such a crime! Well then! Didst thou ever know me to be talking in my sleep? Why therefore am I not trusted, as it is my right? Why am I spat upon by my tribe, and by my son? Where is the cause of such heart-bruising contumely? What! hast thou not come out of my womb? Whence dost thou draw thy blood but from my veins? Whence did flow the milk which fed thy infant lips but from my breast? Wouldst thou be a Sun—nay, the Great Sun, wert thou not my child? Without the tender nursing with which I surrounded thy cradle where wouldst thou be?

By me, and through me, thou art every thing, and to me thou art the most precious and most beloved thing I possess. Yet I stand now by thy side, without being even looked at, and no more noticed by thee, than if I were a worthless cur! Why dost thou not drive me away with thy foot, or thy whip? Is it because in our nation, a son has never been guilty of such an outrage toward his mother? Nay then—why dost thou insult me, in a different, it is true, but no less mortifying manner? To conceal from *me*, the oldest female Sun, *me*, the mother of the sovereign of the Natchez, a great national resolution taken by our nobles, what is it but an affront equivalent to a blow? When the womb of the whole nation is heaving up with the conception of a big design, could such throes escape my motherly penetration? Am I a fool? Am I an idiot? Was it becoming in thee to wait until I should descend to an inquiry? And shouldst thou not, before this time, have opened thy mind to thy mother? Didst thou think that I have lived so long without having acquired sagacity enough to look into thy heart with as much facility as into any of our wells of pure water? The Natchez meditate to rise upon the French.—Is it not the truth? Is not my finger on the sore? Nay; why dost thou start, and why this bewildered look? None of the pale faces listen to us, and dost thou fear that I shall sell thee in bondage to them? What dost thou imagine they could give me, me whose body is bent with age, and whose feet are already sprinkled with the dust of death, in exchange, or as a full price for a son's blood? And now," said she, rising with solemn dignity, and speaking with the deepest emphasis, "farewell forever! The earth refuses to bear the burden of the mother who is despised by her son:—the blessed air which drops from heaven is profaned by entering her lungs.

Dig my grave : for the sight of thy dishonored mother shall not, to-morrow, disgrace any longer the ancestral rays of yonder God, from whom we draw our origin."

Warm tears gushed from the eyes of the young prince when he heard reproaches which racked his heart, but he preserved his composure, and whatever might have been his inward emotion, he calmly rose, and seizing his mother by the arm, he gently forced her to resume her seat. Then, several minutes elapsed, when he seemed to be buried in reflection, and to be struggling against the opposite influences of affection and of prudence. At last he said, mournfully and respectfully :—" Mother, thy reproaches are poisoned arrows which pierce my heart. These reproaches are not deserved. I have never repulsed nor despised thee. But hast thou ever heard that it was permitted to reveal what had been resolved by the wise men of the nation in secret council? Am I not the Great Sun? Must I not set the good example? Wouldst thou persuade thy son to do a base thing? Am I not more bound to secrecy than any body else, from one peculiar circumstance? Is it not darkly rumored" (looking fixedly at his mother) "that my father was a Frenchman? And might I not be suspected of partiality toward them, although the Great Spirit knows that I hate them worse than any red foe our nation ever had! But since thou hast guessed all, what more shall I say? Thou knowest as much as I do. Therefore, close thy lips."

"I approve thy resentment against the oppressors of our race, my son," continued the princess, "but I tremble lest the Natchez should not have taken sufficient precautions to secure their revenge, without exposing our whole nation to destruction. We can not succeed, unless we take the French by surprise. Although their chief has lost his mind, they are wary and brave; if

they discover that we meditate aught against them, they have plenty of merchandise to tempt all the other nations to rise against us. If you were painting your bodies in the colors of war to march against a red nation, my sleep would not be disturbed, and I would not have made to thy feelings the appeal which has disquieted them so much. But the pale faces are a fearful race. They know infinitely more than we do, and they have resources that we dream not of. It is not for myself that I tremble; it is for thee; it is for our nation. Old as I am, what care I how soon or how I die? What is it to me whether I am killed by an Indian or a French warrior? But there is more caution in woman than in man, and I may detect some flaw in the net you have spread around the French, and give good advice. For instance, one thing above all strikes me at first sight. Granting you all the success that you may anticipate, and supposing that you destroy every Frenchman, woman, and child that live in the neighborhood of our villages; admitting also that you take possession of yonder thundering fort, would not their countrymen come from their big village down below, with innumerable red allies, and overwhelm us in complete destruction? What would signify our short-lived triumph?"

Thus she artfully went on until she gradually drew from him the whole plot, and she appeared tranquilized when she knew all the details of the conspiracy, which she confessed to have been conducted with the utmost prudence and skill, her son having given her the most positive assurance that all the French in the colony would be destroyed at one blow and on the same day, all the Indian nations having joined the league, with the exception of the Tunicas and the Oumas, who had not been spoken to, because they were known to be too friendly to the French. Therefore the destruction of

these two tribes had also been resolved upon. "But," said the old princess, "how can you be sure that among so many distant nations, there will not be some mistake as to the day on which the blow is to be struck." "There can be none," answered her son, who then told her all about the bundles of sticks, and informed her that the bundle reserved by the Natchez was preserved in the Great Temple of the principal village.

The princess, whose name was "*Bras Piqué*," or *Pricked Arm*, was greatly alarmed at the extent of the danger which threatened her friends, the French, but she carefully concealed her feelings from her son, and appeared to enter warmly into the conspiracy. In the mean time, she thought of nothing else but of putting the French on their guard, without exposing the safety of her son and of her nation. She acted under the supposition, that if the suspicions of the French were once aroused, they would assume an attitude and take precautions which would check the Natchez, and prevent the breaking out which they meditated. Thus, by words which she let fall from her lips, as it were carelessly, she excited the fears of some Indian women whom she knew to be attached to the French by more than one tender tie, and who communicated their information to their lovers. The old *Bras Piqué*, or *Pricked Arm*, did more; seeing no sign of precaution taken by the French, notwithstanding the warning she had caused to be given, she one day stopped a French soldier whom she accidentally met, and told him to inform the French chief that the Natchez had lost their minds, and that he had better be on the look out, and increase the strength of his fort.

The soldier repeated this admonition to Chopart, who, instead of inquiring into the causes of this strange piece of information, which was sent to him in such a vague

manner, but from such high authority, said that the princess was an old hag, called the soldier a coward and a visionary, put him in the stocks to punish him for spreading false reports, and declared that he would certainly abstain from repairing the fortifications, or from doing any thing which would give the Natchez to understand he was afraid of them, because the secret motive of all these warnings, as he pretended, was to frighten him out of his resolution to force them to evacuate the village of the White Apple.

Indefatigable in her exertions to save the French, *Pricked Arm* penetrated into the temple, and clandestinely withdrew some of the sticks from the bundle, in order to destroy the concert which had been agreed upon among the Indian tribes, and to bring on prematurely the day on which the attack was to be made by the Natchez. She hoped that some of the French, at least, would escape, and have time to put on their guard the rest of the colony. She also contrived to transmit indirect and anonymous warnings to several Frenchmen, who communicated to Chopart what they had learned. But he again branded them with the epithet of cowards, and put some of them under arrest. *Pricked Arm*, astounded at the result of her repeated attempts, and forgetting in her extreme anxiety the resolution she had taken not to expose to danger, by too positive information, her son and her whole nation, went so far as to address one Macé, a sub-lieutenant, and to tell him enough to remove all doubts from minds not unalterably bent on resisting the persuasion of the strongest evidence. She presumed that Macé, being an officer, would have more influence on the French commander. But she was deceived, and Chopart remained wedded to the same fatal incredulity. Bewildered at the sight of such infatuation, the old prin-

cess was struck with superstitious awe, and very naturally came to the conclusion, that the French were doomed by the Great Spirit, and abandoned by the very God they worshiped. From that moment she became passive, and seemed to have accepted the decree of fate with the stoical indifference so common to Indians.

Time, however, was flying apace; and on the very eve of the contemplated attack, Chopart took a step which seemed to be the inspiration of some evil spirit determined to treat its victim to the last with mischievous mockery. In order to show in a signal manner his contempt for the alarming reports which had been made to him, and his determination to put a stop to them for the future, he went with several Frenchmen to the *Great Village* of the Natchez, and caroused with them the whole night. The Great Sun, to whom he communicated all the intelligence which, from time to time, had been laid before him, concerning the alledged conspiracy, behaved with great composure and profound dissimulation, notwithstanding his youth, and persuaded the infatuated man that the Natchez were his best friends, and that if he had enemies, it was among his own countrymen. "In confirmation of my declaration," he said, "my people will bring to thee to-morrow more than the amount of the tribute for which thou hast granted us time for our removal, and will then put thee in possession of the White Apple Village." Chopart returned to the fort, late in the night, drunk with pride and the fumes of the potations in which he had freely indulged. Feeling the want of rest, he gave the most precise order that, under no pretext whatever, he should be waked up before nine in the morning.

When that morning came, which was on the 29th of November, the eve of St. Andrew's day, long before



the rising of the sun there was a great bustling in all the villages of the Natchez. The conspirators had taken their measures with such foresight and precision, that, at the same moment, within a radius of many miles, the house of every Frenchman, however remote it was, found itself full of Indians asking for something or other. Some begged for powder, shot, and brandy, to go on a hunting expedition, promising to make ample returns for the desired loan. Others had a present to make, or an old-remembered debt to pay, or some bargain or other to propose. Motives or excuses of infinite variety were not wanting to remove suspicion. At eight, the Great Sun was seen departing from his village at the head of his nobles and of a troop of warriors. The procession moved with a great noise of instruments, and carried, with as much show as possible, the stipulated tribute of fowls, corn, oil, and furs. The master of ceremonies, gorgeously dressed, and making himself conspicuous above the rest, twirled on high, and with fantastic gestures, the calumet of peace. With demonstrations of joy, they went several times round the fort, and entered the house of the French commander, who, waked up by the noise, made his appearance in his morning gown. Elated at the sight of the valuable presents which were laid before him, laughing in his heart at the credulity of those who had attempted to rouse suspicions in his mind as to the fidelity of his Indian friends, he ordered the *givers of warnings*, as he called them, to be released from their confinement, that they should come to see how futile were their cowardly fears. Then, the Indians began to dance, to sing, and to creep into the fort and everywhere. In the mean time, a chosen band of warriors glided down the hill to the bank of the river, where the long-expected and richly-laden galley, which had arrived the



day previous, was moored. There, each warrior having leisurely picked his man and made his aim sure, a simultaneous discharge was heard.

This was the preconcerted signal, which was followed far and wide by discharges of firearms so close on each other, that they seemed to make but one volley. Let us listen to Governor Périer himself, relating that event in one of his dispatches: "Such being the dispositions of the Indians, and the hour having come," says he, "the general assassination of the French took so little time, that the execution of the deed and the preceding signal were almost but one and the same thing. One single discharge closed the whole affair, with the exception of the house of La Loire des Ursins, in which there were eight men, who defended themselves with desperation. They made the house good against the Indians during the whole day. Six of them were killed, and when night came, the remaining two escaped. When the attack began, La Loire des Ursins happened to be on horseback, and being cut off from his house by the intervening foes, he fought to death, and killed four Indians. The people who were shut up in his house had already killed eight. Thus it cost the Natchez only twelve men to destroy *two hundred and fifty* of ours, through the fault of the commanding officer, who alone deserved the fate which was shared by his unfortunate companions. It was easy for him, with the arms and the forces he had, to inflict on our enemies a severer blow than the one we have received, and which has brought this colony to within two inches of utter destruction."

It is said that Chopart had the grief of surviving all his countrymen. Such was the horror and contempt the Natchez had for him, that death inflicted by the hands of a warrior was thought too honorable for the

French chief. None of that class condescended to lay hands upon him, and the lowest among the *stinking*, or plebeians, was sent for, who beat him to death with a club, in his own garden, whither he had fled. A few Frenchmen escaped, as it were by miracle, from the general massacre: among others, Navarre, Couillard, Canterelle, Louette, and Ricard, who succeeded in reaching New Orleans after many perilous adventures. Two men only were spared by the Natchez, one waggoner, named Mayeux, to be employed by them in transporting all the goods, merchandise, and effects of the French to the public square, in front of which stood the palace of the Great Sun, and where that sovereign was to make a distribution of the spoils among his subjects. The other Frenchman, named Lebeau, was a tailor, and owed his life to that circumstance. As the Natchez stood in want of his craft, they preserved him to turn him to profitable account, and employed him in repairing, or reshaping the clothes of the dead, and in fitting them to the bodies of the new owners. Dumont relates that the Natchez were particularly pleased with the variegated, diversified, and highly-colored patches which he adapted to their vestments.

The women and children, with a few exceptions, were spared and destined to be slaves, their number amounting to about three hundred. Many of the blacks, to whom the Natchez had promised their freedom and a share in the booty, had been induced to join them in the conspiracy. Some of them, however, had the credit of remaining faithful to the French, and succeeded in making their way to New Orleans. The Natchez being under the impression that all the French were destroyed throughout the land, that they had no longer any thing to fear from such redoubtable foes, and finding themselves more wealthy than they had ever been, gave

themselves up to the wildest exhibitions of joy. They wound up that bloody day of the 29th of November, by a general carousal, and they kept dancing and singing until late at night, around pyramids of French heads, piled up as cannon-balls usually are in an arsenal. The agonies of the wretched women and children who witnessed the slaughter of their husbands and fathers, and who, amid the demoniacal rejoicings which followed, had to bear outrages too horrific to be related, are more easily conceived than described! Long before the next day dawned upon them, the Natchez were in such a state of inebriation, that thirty well-determined Frenchmen, says Dumont, could have destroyed the whole nation.

The Natchez, when they came back to their senses, stationed warriors along the Mississippi, to watch for all canoes and barks navigating on that river, and a few days after the massacre, they descried some travelers coming down stream. They were French, and on being hailed, not suspecting what had happened, they came to landing. They were five in number, and hardly had they touched the bank of the river, when they were received with a discharge of muskets. Three were killed, the fourth fled to the woods, where he concealed himself, and he afterward had the good luck to reach the friendly village of the Tunicas. The fifth was taken prisoner, and carried to the great village of the Natchez, where he was tortured by them in one of the public exhibitions of the kind of which they were so fond, with all the refined ferocity peculiar to the Indians.

The Natchez set fire to all the habitations of the French, which were reduced to ashes, and after the first outburst of riotous excesses in which they indulged to celebrate their triumph, they set to work with intel-

uigence and activity, to avail themselves to the utmost of the success they had obtained. It appears that, for some reasons unknown, they had not communicated to the Yazoos the rising they meditated against the French. On the very day of the massacre, a deputation of Yazoos, who perhaps suspected what was going on, had arrived among the Natchez. They were present at the performance of that bloody drama, and being easily persuaded to attack the few French people who had settled on their territory, they departed with a certain number of Natchez warriors. The Yazoo settlement was distant one hundred and twenty miles from the Natchez. This united band of Yazoos and Natchez ascended the Mississippi in boats, and, on their way up, discovered on the bank of the river, in a shady spot, some travelers assembled. They proved to be French, and were coming down the river with one of the Jesuit missionaries. When they were descried by the Indians, these people were engaged in the holy occupation of listening to a mass said by the priest. With that stealthy, cat-like step, so familiar to their race, the Indians approached without being observed, and poured upon them their fire at the very moment they were dropping on their knees, at the elevation of the Host; and they aimed particularly at the priest, whose sacerdotal habiliments were the objects most coveted by their cupidity. Strange to say, the murderous volley of balls proved harmless, and the French had time to fly to their boat. But the Indians had also time to reload their muskets, and fired again at the fugitives, who, being all clustered together in a boat, presented a mark which the most inexperienced shooters could hardly fail to hit. Yet, the only one among the French who was hurt, was the man who was pushing the boat from the bank. He received a ball in the

thigh, but succeeded in getting into the boat, and was subsequently cured at New Orleans. The French considered their escape as providential, and attributed it to the presence of God among them at the elevation of the host, when they were attacked by the savage heathens. For many years after, the priesthood often mentioned this fact in their preachings.

The fort which the French had built among the Yazoos, was called St. Claude. Its commander, Du Coder, being on a visit to the French at Natchez, when they were butchered, shared their fate. The Yazoos had no difficulty in taking by surprise the fort of St. Claude, which had a garrison only of twenty men, whom they killed, together with the few families who had settled around, under the protection of the fort. The destruction of the French settlements at the Yazoos, took place on the first or second day of January, 1730.

At that time, St. Denis was commander of Natchitoches, where he had made himself so popular, that he led the life of a small, half barbaric, half civilized potentate. For hundreds of miles round that settlement, the Indians had submitted to his sway, and had readily acknowledged him as their great chief. He settled authoritatively all the disputes arising among the different tribes, and ruled over them as if he had been born an Indian, and been their natural sovereign. He had really become a powerful chieftain, and in case of need, with a sufficient allowance of time, might have set on foot from five to six thousand warriors. The Natchez feared him more than any thing else, and knowing his daring and indomitable energy, had no doubt but that, on his hearing of the slaughter of his countrymen, he would march against their assassins at the head of a considerable number of the formidable Texan warriors. Resolving, therefore, to anticipate his blow, and to fall

upon him when least expected, they sent one hundred and fifty warriors on that expedition. When these Indians arrived in the vicinity of the French fort at Natchitoches, perceiving that they were discovered by the spies of the vigilant St. Denis, they had recourse to this stratagem. They sent a deputation with the calumet of peace, to inform him that they had been so unfortunate as to have lately had some difficulties with the French settled in their neighborhood, that they wished to take him as arbitrator or umpire, and that they had brought with them a Frenchwoman, whom they wanted to set free, and to deliver to him in token of their good intentions.

St. Denis answered them, that he would accede to their proposition, provided they brought to him the Frenchwoman, with an escort only of ten warriors. The Natchez refused to do so, and insisted upon coming in a body. St. Denis then sent them word, that he saw plainly from their large number, and from their refusal to comply with his demand, that they were traitors and liars bent upon mischief; that he was disposed, however, to allow them to return quietly to their villages, provided they surrendered to him the Frenchwoman, for whom he would pay a ransom. Enraged at the answer of St. Denis, and at the bad result of their expedition, the Natchez burnt the Frenchwoman in sight of the French fort, and hastily intrenched themselves, so as to be protected against any attack from St. Denis, during the approaching night.

St. Denis had at his disposal only forty soldiers, and twenty settlers. But he was not the man to hesitate on any emergency of this kind:—and a little before daybreak, leaving twenty soldiers in the fort, he marched against the camp of the Natchez, at the head of forty Frenchmen, and forty select Natchitoches war-

riors. He fell upon them so unexpectedly, and with such fury, that, in an instant, he routed them completely, and killed sixty, without having lost one of his men. Of the Natchez who fled, a good many died of their wounds; only a few reached their native hills, and were the bearers of a melancholy tale.

Ricard was the first fugitive from Natchez, who brought to New Orleans the information of the destruction of that important French settlement. He looked so haggard and so bewildered, that he was thought to be deranged in mind, and nobody would believe his statements. But Couillard and a few others reached New Orleans soon after, on the 3d of December, and left no room for doubt. Governor Périer then knew all the extent of the danger he had run, when he had prudently refused to receive the visit of the Choctaws, who, to the number of six hundred warriors, had arrived at the mouth of the Chefuncte River, in Lake Pontchartrain, on the 1st of December, and had sent a deputation to Périer, to ask leave to come and present him with the calumet of peace. Governor Périer thought that, whatever advantages might be derived from this visit, if really friendly, would be more than counterbalanced by the danger of admitting so many Indians in the capital, and sent them word, that he would receive their chief with thirty warriors only. Seeing that they were suspected, they returned to their villages, and contented themselves, on their way home, with killing and stealing some cattle which belonged to the Pascagoula settlement. Which circumstance shows clearly the evil intentions with which they were animated.

A short time after, the Choctaws sent a deputation to the Natchez, to smoke with them the calumet of peace, and to renew their treaty of alliance. But not



receiving as valuable presents as they expected from the rich spoils of the French, they upbraided the Natchez with their meanness and perfidy, reproaching them with having hastened prematurely the day of the attack upon the French, and with having, in this manner, robbed the other Indian nations of their chance of plundering their common enemy. They said that it was owing to the indiscreet haste of the Natchez, prompted by their uncontrollable avidity, that the Choctaw expedition against New Orleans had failed, the French having, no doubt, received at that time some information of what had happened at Natchez. The Choctaw deputation at last departed in great anger, after having told the Natchez that they were no better than dogs, and that they would be treated as such. Not long after, there came another Choctaw deputation, who were not better pleased with their reception than the first. Having been informed that the Natchez were deliberating on the expediency of killing all their French prisoners, women and children, who, they thought, proved to be rather an expensive encumbrance, the Choctaws went in ceremony to the public square, struck at the warriors' red post, which stood there according to immemorial custom, and told the Natchez that the French were the allies of the Choctaws, who would march with all the forces of their numerous nation against the Natchez, if they dared to make away with a single one of their prisoners. This energetic demonstration produced great effect upon the Natchez, and probably saved the lives of the French captives. After having uttered these solemn threats, the Choctaw ambassadors departed, leaving the Natchez in a violent state of anxiety, which induced them to meet frequently in council, without being able to come to any con-



clusion, as to what they would ultimately do in an emergency which looked so critical.

Governor Périer, on the very day that he was informed of the Natchez massacre, sent an officer with a detachment of men up the river in a boat, to put the planters on both sides of the river on their guard; and to order them to construct redoubts at certain convenient distances, wherein to take refuge in case of need, with their families, their goods, and their cattle. This order was complied with in a short time, and the whole *coast*, as it is called, from New Orleans to Natchez, in those parts where it was settled, was put in a state of defense. The same officer was instructed to look closely into what was going on among the small nations on the banks of the river, and to make sure of their fidelity. A courier was sent to two Choctaw chiefs who were shooting ducks on Lake Pontchartrain; and they were informed that Governor Périer wished to have *a talk with them*. The Choctaw nation was by far the most powerful of all the Indian tribes, and great and well-founded doubts existed as to their intended course of action in this dangerous crisis. It had become extremely important to secure their services, and in this way, to remove the exaggerated apprehensions of the colonists. The terror which prevailed was so intense, that Governor Périer, in one of his dispatches, said:

“I am extremely sorry to see, from the manifestation of such universal alarm, that there is less of French courage in Louisiana than anywhere else. Fear had assumed such uncontrollable domination over all, that the very insignificant nation of the Chouachas, a little above New Orleans, which was composed of thirty warriors, became a subject of terror to all our people. This induced me to have them destroyed by our negroes, who

executed this mission with as much promptitude as secrecy. This example, given by our negroes, kept in check all the small nations higher up the river. If I had been inclined to avail myself of the good dispositions of our negroes, I could have destroyed by them all those nations which are of no service to us, and which, on the contrary, may stimulate our blacks to revolt, as the Natchez have done. But certain prudential considerations prevented me, and in the situation in which I was, I felt that it was safe to trust none but the few French I had at hand. I therefore called a general meeting of them, and provided them with arms. I have raised one hundred and fifty men in New Orleans, and divided them into four companies, each commanded by a member of the council. I have chosen the lieutenants among trusty persons employed by the government. At the head of the companies which I have formed on the banks of the river, I have put the most influential planters, and I have ordered that a certain number of negroes be sent to make intrenchments around the city of New Orleans." It is probable that one of the reasons which prompted Périer to have the throats of the Chouachas cut by the negroes, was to produce a state of hostility between the red and black races, of which the whites were equally distrustful. It was an act of policy, cruel, it is true, but not without its logic.

On the 5th of January, 1730, Governor Périer sent a vessel to France to inform the government of the precarious situation of the colony, and to ask for the assistance which was so much required. He had also dispatched a detachment of soldiers and planters, under the engineer Broutin, to join Loubois, who commanded at Point Coupée, and these officers were requested to try, by a bold and sudden stroke, to carry off the

French women and children, the negroes and all the canoes the Natchez had in their possession. Captain de Lassus was sent, by the way of Mobile, to the Choctaws, to ascertain whether or not that nation was disposed to side with the French.

Every day there came to New Orleans the alarming report of some traveler being murdered on his way down the Mississippi. On the 8th of January, Father Doutreleau, a Jesuit, who, having been attacked at the mouth of Yazoo River, had received two wounds in the arm and lost three men, reached New Orleans. To prevent the recurrence of such events was extremely desirable; and on the 15th, Governor P rier dispatched a bark with twenty white men and six negroes, to carry ammunition to the Illinois settlement, and to pick up on the way, protect and escort to New Orleans, all the French travelers they might meet.

On the 16th, the governor received a piece of intelligence which removed a load of anxieties from his mind. It was, that the Choctaws, to the number of seven hundred warriors, commanded by a French officer named Le Sueur, had marched against the Natchez, and that one hundred and fifty warriors of that nation had set off to throw themselves between the Natchez and the Yazooos, to prevent the former from sending away to the latter any portion of the French prisoners, or of the negroes, as it was reported they would do, if they were attacked.

The rendezvous-general of the French who were to operate against the Natchez was at the Tunicas, and that expedition was put under the command of Loubois. While the French were still gathering at that spot, it was deemed expedient to send five men to discover what was going on among the Natchez. They ascended the Mississippi in a boat, and landed, says Le Page du

Pratz, at nine miles from the Great Village of the Natchez, at the mouth of a small stream on which that village was situated, and which discharged itself into the Mississippi at the foot of a hill, from which a canoe might be spied six miles off. The French scouts were not seen, however, and they felt so secure, that after their having landed, night coming on, they went quietly to sleep, as if they were not in the very lap of danger. The next morning, they breakfasted merrily, and drank so much brandy, that their courage worked itself up to the highest pitch of boldness. Thus, they walked straight toward the Great Village of the Natchez, without making any attempt at concealment, and they were within two miles of it, when, on a sudden, yelling Indians started up around them in every direction. The French, instead of crying out that they came with peaceful intentions, and of trying to impress the enemy with that persuasion, presumed to defend themselves against such overwhelming odds; and one of them by the name of Navarre, who had been one of the few that had escaped from the great massacre on the 29th of November, was the first to fire. The Indians, however, appeared disposed to keep altogether on the defensive, and summoned the French to surrender. But these madmen, throwing themselves into a ravine which presented the appearance of a natural intrenchment, continued their fire, which was at last returned by the Indians. Navarre was wounded, and became more furious: speaking the language of the Natchez, he taunted them with every sort of opprobrious epithet, and went on fighting until he was killed.

The four other Frenchmen, who seemed to have been entirely under the influence of Navarre, and who had been fighting also with great courage, surrendered as soon as he was dead. They were conducted to the

Great Sun, and Mesplais, or Mesplet, an officer of noble birth, of the province of Bearn, in France, who ought to have known how to control the imprudent temerity of such a man as Navarre, a mere soldier, destitute of education, was interrogated by the Indian prince. On his being asked what the object of his visit was, Mesplais answered that he had been sent by his chief as the bearer of propositions of peace. "But," observed the Great Sun, "how camest thou to fire at those who merely said to thee to surrender? One of thy companions is killed and thou art wounded, through his and thy own fault. Is this the conduct of peace-bearers?" Mesplais answered that Navarre had taken too much of the *fire-liquor*, and begged the Great Sun to remember that, on the death of this man, he, Mesplais, had ordered his companions to lay down their arms. The Great Sun appeared to be satisfied with this explanation, and ordered them to be released, but to be closely watched. He then sent for one of the female prisoners, a woman by the name of Desnoyers, and said to her: "Write to thy great war-chief, that if he wishes for peace, and desires that all the French prisoners and the negroes be restored to him, he must send me for every one of them so many casks of brandy, so many blankets, muskets, shirts, provisions, &c." . . . . . He wanted so many different things, and in such quantity, that it would have been impossible to find in the whole colony what he had the presumption to ask, even if it had been thought to be an act of expediency and of good policy to yield so much to these barbarians.

Desnoyers wrote down what she was told, and availed herself of this opportunity to inform Loubois of the miserable condition in which the French captives were, and of the dangers which threatened them. She did not fail to communicate all she knew about the prepara-

tions the Natchez had made for defense, and to impart every other piece of intelligence she thought might be useful to the French.

The Great Sun delivered the letter to one of Mesplais' companions, and ordered him to carry it to the French chief at the Tunicas, and to inform him that if a favorable answer was not sent back in three days, the hostages, whom the Natchez had in their possession, would abide the consequences of their anger and disappointment. Eagerly did the French emissary depart on his mission, and "even without looking back," says Le Page du Pratz. So active did he prove himself, that he arrived on that same day at the Tunicas, and handed the letter to Loubois, who vouchsafed no answer.

While the Natchez remained in the expectation of an answer, they treated their prisoners kindly, but on the fourth day after the departure of the French emissary, the Great Sun, having given up all hopes of his return, flew into a violent passion, and sentenced to death the three other Frenchmen. Two of them, one a common soldier, and the other an officer of education and birth, by the name of St. Amand, were killed instantly, without being exposed to much suffering. Unfortunately for Mesplais, he had made himself conspicuous in some of the preceding wars of the French against the Natchez, and he had been for the Indians an object of particular notice, on account of the long flowing hair which curled down on his shoulders, and which made it a very *desirable scalp*. They concentrated, therefore, the fury of their revenge on such a well-known warrior, and swore they would make him weep like a woman. He was tied to the celebrated Indian stake, exquisitely tortured during three days and three nights, and died at last, after having exhibited superhuman fortitude, and without having gratified his torturers by uttering

one word of complaint. All the Frenchwomen, prisoners among the Natchez were present, and kneeling round the miserable victim of savage ferocity, addressed loud prayers to heaven during all the time that the lingering execution lasted. The sufferer never shed a tear, nor allowed one groan to escape his lips, but, occasionally, would beg the Frenchwomen for water. That was a boon, however, which they were prevented from giving. It was a horrific spectacle, and a minute description of it would convey to us but a faint idea of the hideous reality, and of the appalling dangers to which our ancestors were exposed, when toiling so painfully to prepare for us the peaceful and glorious home which we now enjoy.

The Avoyelles, Tunicas, and other small nations, had declared themselves against the Natchez, and were harassing them by partial attacks and marauding expeditions. Not unmindful of the threats which the Choctaw delegation had made against them, the Natchez, coming gradually to a more correct appreciation of their situation, began to feel a real desire to accept, or to offer reasonable terms of peace. Thus, one night, when they had met in deliberation, they sent for a Frenchwoman who spoke their language well, and they interrogated her on the practicability of a peace with her nation. "Are not the French of a forgiving nature," said the Great Sun to her, "and do they not often embrace their enemies and eat with them, after having met them in battle?" The Frenchwoman, who was greatly frightened, answered that her countrymen were as mild as lambs, although rather of a pugnacious temperament; that they would frequently feast with their enemies before fighting, and feast again with them after fighting; that they were very fond of such alternate feastings and fightings, and were of all people the



most easily pacified. She was skillful enough thus to harp on the right cord, and the Indians, well pleased with her answers, dismissed her with courtesy from their presence.

In spite, or perhaps on account of their fears, and to lose sight of their anxieties, the Natchez had been carousing, almost every day, since the destruction of the French settlement. The temptation was too strong for them to resist, when they had in their possession so much liquor, and so many provisions taken from the French warehouses. On the 27th of January, they were feasting on the banks of St. Catherine's creek, when they were suddenly attacked by the Choctaws, headed by Le Sueur. Their defeat would have been complete, if those negroes who had joined the Natchez in the massacre of the French, had not fought with desperate valor, and, by their fierce resistance, had not given time to their Indian allies to retire within the two forts they had prepared, in anticipation of the expected war which they knew would soon burst upon them. But the Choctaws killed sixty of the Natchez, took from fifteen to twenty prisoners, rescued fifty-four French women and children, and recovered about one hundred of the negroes.

On the 8th of February, half of the French forces arrived at Natchez, and joined the Choctaws on St. Catherine's creek. On the 9th, they left the quarters of the Choctaws, and encamped at a certain distance nearer the Mississippi. The rest of the army came up on that day, which was spent in reconnoitering and skirmishing with the Indians. The 10th, 11th, and 12th were employed in carrying the artillery, ammunition, and provisions from the boats to the French camp. The 13th was consumed in fruitless parleying with the Indians, in approaching nearer to the forts, and in trans-



porting pieces of artillery on the mound on which stood the Great Temple, and which happened to command the two forts. The French protected that position with intrenchments.

On the 14th, at daybreak, the French opened against the forts their fire, which was answered briskly. The four pieces of artillery which the French had, were hardly fit for service, and were wretchedly managed. The Natchez had three pieces, which were still more clumsily handled. At night, the Natchez came through a cane-brake to dislodge the French from the temple. But some grape thrown among them forced them to retreat.

On the 15th, the French, at the distance of five hundred and sixty yards, cannonaded the forts during six hours, without throwing down one single stake, and the Choctaws, to whom they had promised to make a breach in less than two hours, became discouraged, and hooted at the impotency of the French missiles.

On the 16th, a man by the name of Du Parc, was sent with a flag to summon the forts to surrender. He was received with a general discharge of musketry, which made him scamper away in such haste that he left behind him his flag. It would have fallen into the hands of the Indians, had not a soldier, known under the nickname of the *Parisian*, run to the spot and carried away the flag under a heavy fire from the enemy. He was immediately made a sergeant as a reward for his valor. At the very moment when the *Parisian* was rushing to rescue the flag, the Indians had opened their gates to make a sally to take it. Some Frenchwomen availed themselves of that circumstance to rush out pellmell with the Indians, and succeeded in gaining the French camp. But the Indians avenged themselves for their escape in the most atrocious manner

The poor women had left children in the fort, hoping that they would be taken care of by their companions in captivity. The Indians seized these children, and impaled them on the stakes of the fort, to the great horror and rage of the French. On that day, an additional body of men arrived at the French camp, with four pieces of artillery quite as worthless as those the besiegers had already. Despairing to make with such artillery any impression on the forts, the French resolved to have recourse to mining, and went to work accordingly. Some, more impatient and more intrepid than the rest, offered to rush close to the walls and to fling grenades into the forts, but Loubois refused, under the apprehension of doing as much injury to the French captives as to the Indians.

From the 17th to the 22d of February, the French made scientific preparations to attack the forts, and were engaged in erecting gabions and in undermining. On the 22d, during the night, one hundred Natchez attacked the French works in front, and two hundred in the rear, under the protection of a wild cane-field through which they had approached. They broke through the mantelets, penetrated into the last trench or traverse, and assailed with fury the temple and the French battery. They fought with desperation during three quarters of an hour, and retired with considerable loss, but carrying away a good many blankets, spades, and other articles. The Choctaws came to the assistance of the French with great readiness.

On the 23d, the Choctaws threw the French into consternation by threatening to withdraw, if the siege was not carried on with more vigor. This representation had its effect, and on the 24th, a battery of four pieces of the caliber of four pounds was established at three hundred and sixty yards from the forts, and the

French informed the Natchez that they were determined to blow them up at all hazards to the French captives, if they did not surrender. Intimidated by the more active preparations made by the French, the Natchez sent one of their female captives, Madame Desnoyers, of whom it has already been spoken, to make propositions of peace. But she remained in the French camp, and no answer was returned to the Natchez.

On the 25th, the Natchez hoisted a flag as a token that they wished to parley. Alibamon Mengo, one of the most famous Choctaw chiefs, growing impatient at all these parleyings which never had any result, approached one of the forts, and addressed this harangue to the Natchez: "Did you ever hear that such a numerous band of Indians as ours ever remained together two months encamped before forts? From this circumstance so foreign to our customs and habits, you may judge of our zeal and attachment for the French. It is therefore perfectly useless in you, who are but a handful of people, when compared to our nation, to persist in refusing to give up to the French their women, children, and negroes. So far, the French have treated you with more leniency than you deserve, considering the quantity of their blood which you have shed. As to us, Choctaws, we are determined to blockade you until you die of hunger." This speech had its effect, and the Natchez promised to deliver to the Choctaws all the captives, provided the French would remove to the bank of the river with their artillery. This was done on the 26th, and thus terminated the siege. The French, whose numbers, as far as we can judge from conflicting statements, amounted to five hundred, lost fifteen men during that siege.

The cowardly and notorious Ecte-Actal acted as ne-

gotiator between the French and the Indians, and it had been agreed through him that the French forces would, as I have already said, withdraw to the bank of the river, and that the Natchez, on surrendering to the Choctaws the French captives and spoils, would remain in quiet possession of their lands and forts. This treaty was nothing but the embodiment of mutual deceit. The French commander, thinking himself absolved from adherence to his word by the proverbial perfidy of the Indians, had resolved to recommence the siege, and to complete the destruction of the Natchez, immediately after having got the French prisoners out of their hands; and the Natchez, in their turn, who did not trust the French, had made up their minds to fly with all the spoils they could carry. On the 27th, they delivered to the Choctaws all the French women, children, and negroes, and in the night of the 28th, they made their escape. On the morning of the 29th, the French, much to their surprise, saw the forts deserted, and found in them nothing but worthless rags. Thus finished this expedition, which reflects little credit on the French arms. It was evidently ill-concerted; the French ought certainly to have been as expeditious as the Choctaws, and to have arrived at the same time to strike a crushing blow with their united forces. On the contrary, the undisciplined Choctaws, who had to come by land over three hundred miles, were the first in the field and on the spot, and there had to wait about fifteen days for their white allies, who, when they invested at last the forts of the Natchez, and attacked with light pieces of artillery, almost worthless it is true, and with five hundred men, could do nothing effective in twenty days. In the end, it was the intervention of the Choctaws which succeeded in bringing the Natchez to terms; it was to the Choctaws and not to the French,

that they consented to give up their prisoners; and then, eluding the vigilance of the French, or blinding them by the influence of bribery and corruption, they achieved their retreat with honor and without the slightest loss.

Diron d'Artaguet, one of the king's commissaries, commenting on this expedition in one of his dispatches, reflects severely on the want of policy, of judgment, and of activity exhibited by Périer on this occasion. He also blames Loubois for having lost so many days at the Tunicas, where he stopped so long under the apprehension of a general conspiracy, which, if he moved forward, would, as he feared, have put him in the awkward position of having the Natchez in front and other hostile nations in the rear. He speaks in no measured terms of what he calls "*the shameful conclusion of the siege*;" and says, "the Choctaws, it is alledged, wanted to retire, but the truth is, that the French army was the first to give up; and strange stories are told about silver plate, and other valuable articles, which became the subjects of clandestine transactions." He thus goes on, intimating pretty broadly that the Natchez bribed the French into allowing them to escape.

Governor Périer says: "Several causes have prevented our capturing the whole Natchez nation. The first, the weakness of our troops, which were good for nothing; the second, the distrust in which we were of the Choctaws, whom we suspected of treason. This was not without foundation; for the Natchez, during the siege, reproached them a thousand times with their perfidy, after having joined in the general conspiracy of which the Natchez related the circumstances to us. They also boasted that the English and Chickasaws were coming to their rescue. All these cir-

cumstances, which were not encouraging for men who had but little experience, forced Loubois, who had served with distinction, to be satisfied with the surrender of our women, children, and negroes. This was the essential point. D'Artaguet (a brother of the commissary of that name) has served with the most brilliant valor, and the planters, with credit, having D'Arensbourg and De Laye at their head. The creoles distinguished themselves particularly; all the officers have done their duty, with the exception of Renault d'Hauterive, De Mouy, and Villainville. Fifteen negroes, in whose hands we had put weapons, performed prodigies of valor. If the blacks did not cost so much, and if their labors were not so necessary to the colony, it would be better to turn them into soldiers, and to dismiss those we have, who are so bad and so cowardly that they seem to have been manufactured purposely for this colony."

The Natchez, on leaving their forts and native hills, crossed the Mississippi to take refuge among the Ouachitas. They were pursued by the chief of the Tunicas at the head of fifty warriors, who kept on their trail in the hope of picking up stragglers. On the territory thus abandoned the French began the erection of a brick fort, the command of which, with a garrison of one hundred men, was given to the Baron of Cresnay, who was also put at the head of all the troops in Louisiana, but who continued to act, however, in a subordinate capacity to Governor Périer. Loubois was rewarded for his successful campaign against the Natchez by being appointed Major and Commander of New Orleans.

When the French and their red allies came to the settlement of their accounts, it was found to be a matter of no small difficulty. The Choctaws proved to be

more exacting in their pretensions than the Natchez were, in relation to the delivery of the French women, children, and negroes. The negotiation waxed so hot, that the French and Indians were very near coming to blows. Harmony was at last restored between them, by the interference of the chief of the Tunicas. The French having given up almost every thing they could part with, and promised much more, the Choctaws delivered to them the captives, who were hastily sent down the river, to remove all further pretext for claim or altercation. The Choctaws, on the occasion of this war between the French and Natchez, behaved with consummate skill. They first dealt with the Natchez, and put up their alliance with them at the highest bid, and after playing them off for some time with this delusive hope, and extorting from them every thing they could, seeing that they had pumped the well dry, they turned toward the French, and listened to their overtures, of which they made the most to their own advantage. So that this war ruined the Natchez, impoverished the French, and enriched only the Choctaws. Thus it appears, that, in diplomacy at least, and in national egotism, they were not far behind the most civilized nations of modern times.

Governor Périer availed himself of the fears of the colonists, to push on with activity the enclosing of the city of New Orleans,—and between Natchez and New Orleans, he established eight small forts, as guarantees of protection, and places of refuge in case of need. He also took measures to cause all the small nations which dwelt between the Balize and Natchez, to remove within the year, with the exception of the Tunicas, who had given so many proofs of attachment to the French.

The poor victims of the Natchez massacre were received at New Orleans with great humanity, and enter-



tained at the public expense in the Charity Hospital, where they were nursed by the Ursulines with zeal. De la Chaise made a generous use of the extensive authority with which he was clothed, to satisfy all their wants. Many of the widows were soon married, and concessions of lands were made to them at Point Coupée, where most of them ultimately settled.

Forgetting, it seems, Chopart's provocations, Governor Périer, in his dispatches, and the other French officers, all agreed in taxing the English with having instigated and provoked the war of the Natchez. "The English know," says Périer, "that we are the only barriers between them and Mexico, and that their taking possession of the banks of the Mississippi would soon be followed by their occupation of the Spanish colonies." Thus what has happened one century later, was distinctly foreseen in 1730.

This year, the colony lost De la Chaise, one of the worthiest men it had yet possessed. He left a name deservedly popular among the people, for unflinching integrity, and for the impartiality with which he checked abuses of power, and punished delinquencies among those who hitherto had always been sure of impunity. His sudden death gave rise to some dark rumors of his having been poisoned by those who had cause to fear his investigations. These rumors were long rife in the colony. After having passed a panegyric on his virtues, Le Page du Pratz concludes by saying, "Those orphans and widows who escaped from the Natchez massacre, would be extremely ungrateful if they did not, during all their life, pray for the soul of that good and charitable man."

On the 1st of August, Governor Périer wrote: "Those of the Indians who had entered into the general conspiracy, have, since its failure, come back to us,



and now help us in daily harassing the Natchez, who have crossed the Mississippi, and retired into the interior of the country. Since their flight, I have succeeded in having fifty of them either killed or taken prisoners. *Latterly, I burned here four men, and two women, and sent the rest to St. Domingo* :—two hundred and fifty warriors of the friendly nations, have been dispatched by me, to watch and blockade the Natchez, until we receive more troops from France.”

The burning of two women and of four men was done, no doubt, in retaliation of Indian atrocities. But this imitation of their barbarous manners could do no good. It was not only an act of useless cruelty, but of exceedingly bad policy. It could not serve as a check, because it could not intimidate men who gloried in such practices. On the contrary, it must have looked, in the estimation of the Indians, as an approval of their national custom, by a people who pretended to be so much more enlightened, and therefore it must have operated as an incentive, or encouragement. But what is remarkable and characteristic is the cool, business-like indifference, and the matter of fact tone with which Governor Périer informs his government of the auto-da-fé which has taken place by his orders. He writes on the burning of four men and two women with as much unconcern, as a cook would about the roasting of a leg of mutton !

Although scattered about, the Natchez did not cease to make the French feel occasionally, that they were not all exterminated. One day, they fell on twenty Frenchmen, who were cutting timber in a cypress swamp, to be used in the fort they were constructing, and they killed nineteen, among whom was “*the Parisian*,” who had so much distinguished himself during the siege. Another day, six Natchez warriors had the

hardihood to penetrate, under the garb of friendly Indians, into the fort itself, and while there, they rushed, with the fury of mad despair and revenge, on the French, of whom they killed five, and wounded many more. Five of these dare-devils were killed after a desperate fight, and the sixth, being taken prisoner, was *burnt*.

A few days after, the Tunicas carried to New Orleans a Natchez woman they had captured, and Governor Périer allowed them to *burn* her in great ceremony on a platform erected in front of the city, between the city and the Levee. I regret to relate that the whole population of New Orleans turned out to witness that Indian ceremony. The victim supported, with the most stoical fortitude, all the tortures which were inflicted upon her, and did not shed a tear,—on the contrary, she upbraided her torturers with their want of skill, and flinging at them every opprobrious epithet she could think of, she prophesied their speedy destruction. Her prediction proved true:—the Tunicas had hardly returned home, when they were surprised by the Natchez, their village burnt, their old chief, the constant ally of the French, killed, and almost their whole nation destroyed.

These deeds of so much daring show the state of desperation to which the Indians had been reduced, and their thirst for revenge. They were executed by a part of that nation which had taken refuge among the Chickasaws, while the French had thought that the whole nation had crossed the Mississippi, and gone over to Black River.

The Chickasaws, having thus granted an asylum to the Natchez, foresaw that they would be attacked in their turn, and sought to anticipate the blow, by stirring up the Indian nations against the French, and by

exciting the blacks to revolt. Fortunately, the conspiracy of the blacks was discovered in time; one woman was hung, and eight men broken on the wheel, among whom was a negro of the name of Samba, who was at the head of the conspirators, and who was a man of the most desperate character. The majority of the negroes then in the colony were Banbaras, and they were the concocters of the rebellion. Their plan was, after having butchered the whites, to keep as their slaves all the blacks who were not of their nation, and to rule the country under leaders periodically elected. It would have been a sort of Banbara republic.

All these events, crowding upon each other, had kept the colonists in a constant fever of fearful excitement. Their apprehensions were a little allayed by the arrival, on the 10th of August, of a small additional corps of troops, commanded by De Salverte, a brother of Périér; so that the forces of the colony could then be set down at about one thousand to twelve hundred regulars, and eight hundred militiamen. It would have been a pretty effective force, if it could have been kept concentrated, instead of being scattered in distant settlements.

The principal officers who were then in active service in Louisiana, were the following:—

THE CHEVALIER DE LOUBOIS,	D'HAUTERIVE,
THE BARON OF CRESNAY,	DE LUSSE,
THE CHEVALIER DE NOYAN,	PETIT DE LIEULLIERS,
“ DE ST. JULIEN,	SIMARE DE BELLEISLE,
“ D'ARENSBOURG,	MARIN DE LA TOUR,
D'ARTAGUETTE,	DE GRANDPRE,
DE BEAUCHAMP,	THE CHEVALIER D'HERNEUVILLE,
DE BESSAN,	DE L'ANGLOISERIE,
DE ST. DENIS,	DE ST. ANGE,
DE GAUVRIT,	DE LABRUISSONNIER,
DE PRADEL,	DE COULANGES.
DE COURCELLES,	

- They were, all of them, aristocratic scions of noble houses, who had come to better their fortunes in Louisiana, and with the hope of more rapid advancement in their military career, on account of the dangers of the colonial service, in which, for that reason, years counted double for the army, either for promotion, or in support of an application for a retiring pension.

## SIXTH LECTURE.

**EXPEDITION OF PÉRIER AGAINST THE NATCHEZ—HE GOES UP RED RIVER AND BLACK RIVER IN PURSUIT OF THEM—SIEGE OF THEIR FORT—MOST OF THEM ARE TAKEN PRISONERS AND SOLD AS SLAVES—CONTINUATION OF THE NATCHEZ WAR—THE INDIA COMPANY SURRENDERS ITS CHARTER—ORDINANCES ON THE CURRENCY OF THE COUNTRY—BIENVILLE REAPPOINTED GOVERNOR—SITUATION OF THE COLONY AT THAT TIME—THE NATCHEZ TAKE REFUGE AMONG THE CHICKASAWS—GREAT RISE OF THE MISSISSIPPI AND GENERAL INUNDATION—EXTRAORDINARY NUMBER OF MAD DOGS—EXPEDITION OF BIENVILLE AGAINST THE CHICKASAWS—HE ATTACKS THEIR VILLAGES—BATTLE OF ACKIA—DARING EXPLOIT OF THE BLACK MAN, SIMON—BIENVILLE IS BEATEN AND FORCED TO RETREAT—EXPEDITION OF D'ARTAGUETTE AGAINST THE CHICKASAWS—HIS DEFEAT AND DEATH—HISTORY OF JOHN PHILIP GRONDEL—OTHER EVENTS AND FACTS FROM 1729 TO 1736.**

THE French had at last taken possession of all the ancient domains of the Natchez; but Governor Périer, considering the depredations still committed by that indomitable tribe, came to the conclusion that their complete destruction was indispensable to the prosperity and safety of the colony. Accordingly, he departed for Mobile, to renew treaties of alliance which the French had with the Choctaws, and to take all the measures necessary to secure their neutrality, while he would be engaged in the prosecution of the war of extermination he had determined to carry against the Natchez. The Choctaws were so much pleased with the presents made to them by Périer, that they offered to join him in the new expedition he meditated against the Natchez. But Périer refused, because he thought it good policy to show the Choctaws that the French could, contrary to the belief of these barbarians, do very well without their aid.

On the 13th of November, 1730, Périer returned to New Orleans, where he found that his brother Salverte had almost completed all the preparations necessary for the contemplated expedition. On the 9th of December, Salverte departed with two battalions of marines he had taken from a ship of the line, with instructions to wait for the governor at the village of Carlestin, where he was joined, on the 13th, by that high functionary, with all the ammunition, provisions, &c., which were required, and all the troops of the colony which could be spared.

Before proceeding farther, Périer received the grateful intelligence that the Indian nations on the northern frontiers had remained faithful to the French, and were waging vigorous war against the nation of the Foxes, the hereditary foes of the Illinois, whose friendship to the French had made them valuable allies on all occasions. Périer was officially informed that a great battle had taken place between the Foxes and the Illinois, headed by some Frenchmen; and that the Foxes had been so completely routed, that they had lost from eleven to twelve hundred men. It was one of the fiercest Indian battles which was ever put on record.

On the 14th, Governor Périer proceeded to Bayagoulas, where he stopped four days to wait for the division of planters commanded by Benac, and for the larger boats which contained the provisions, and which were so unwieldy that they could not keep up with the army. The governor had divided his army into three corps, in order to prevent conflicts and to produce emulation. The first, composed of one hundred and fifty marines and forty sailors, was commanded by his brother Salverte. The second, consisting of the troops of the colony, was under the Baron of Cresnay; and the third, the militia, was headed by Benac. This last corps

joined the rest, only at Bayagoulas, on the 19th; the whole army moved forward on the 22d, and on the same day encamped at Manchac for the night. There, Périer left the army, and hastened to the Tunicas, in order to accelerate the movements of such of the warriors of that tribe as had survived the defeat they had suffered from the Natchez. On the 27th, Salverte, to whom Périer had left the command of the army, joined his brother at the Tunicas.

On the 28th, the army began its march for the mouth of Red River, where was the general rendezvous, and where the ship, Prince of Conti, had been sent with most of the articles necessary for the campaign. Périer remained until the 3d of January, 1731, with the Tunicas, where his presence was required to make them join the expedition; which they were loth to do, because they were afraid to leave their village, their women and children, exposed to the fury of some of the marauding parties of the Natchez. They had indeed good reasons for apprehension, having just been informed that De Coulanges, whom Périer had sent in a boat, with some Frenchmen and a crew of twenty men composed of Indians and free blacks, to the fort lately built at Natchez, with orders to proceed as high up the river as the Arkansas, had been attacked, and that half of his companions had been killed or wounded. De la Touche, Beaulieu, and Cochart were among the former, and De Coulanges had received two severe wounds. This bold attack on the part of the Natchez had frightened all the small nations, and Périer could not gather round him more than one hundred and fifty of their warriors, but they were of the bravest.

On the 4th of January, 1731, Périer joined the army at the mouth of Red River, where he found all his forces united. The difficulty then was to discover the

stronghold where the Natchez had concealed themselves in those unknown regions. The French ascended Red River, went into Black River, from Black River into a stream they called *Silver River*, and from that stream into a small lake, not far from which they had been told the Natchez were. It is not improbable that the stream which is here mentioned is no other than the one now set down on the map as the Ouachita, and that the lake alluded to is the small one which is at a short distance from Trinity, in the parish of Catahoula. The French arrived at that lake on the 19th of January, after having met on that day a party of Natchez, of whom they killed two men and one woman. There, the French had happened to come very close to the stronghold of the Natchez, without as yet being aware of it. But on the 20th, they captured a Natchez boy, who was fishing, and who, under the influence of threats and promises of reward, showed the French the path which led to the Indian fort. Governor Périer sent forward French and Indian scouts and marksmen, supported by two companies of regulars commanded by De Lusser and De la Girouardiere. He next followed with the rest of the army, after having left behind the Baron of Cresnay with one hundred men, to protect the French camp and boats.

Governor Périer had hardly given the order to march, when he heard a brisk fire of musketry kept up between the fort and the skirmishers. After having marched an hour, the army came in sight of the fort. The Tunicas attacked some fortified houses which seemed to be intended as outposts, and drove the Natchez out of them. On the 21st, when the fort was completely invested, Périer ordered the Baron of Cresnay to join him. He then sent a flag to the Natchez, and summoned them to give up the negroes who remained in their posses-



sion. The Natchez fired at the flag, crying out that the French were dogs, and that they would have nothing to do with them. On this answer, the French began to cast grenades into the fort, and had succeeded in producing considerable effect, when the two mortars which they used, being of wood, bursted, and wounded those who worked them. At half-past five in the evening, the Natchez made a sally, in which they killed a negro, a grenadier of the marines, and wounded a sergeant and De Laye, one of the militia officers. At eight o'clock the same evening, although the weather was very stormy, the French began to mine, and kept up their firing with muskets, one field-piece, and one mortar, which was their last one, and for which they had sent to the boats. The Natchez still retained possession of a fortified outpost, which enfiladed the French workmen engaged in the trenches. On the 22d, Périer ordered it to be attacked by twelve grenadiers and twelve sappers. But on their being repulsed, he sent his brother, who carried it in a quarter of an hour, after a vigorous defense made by the Indians.

On the 23d, the French, under the protection of the redoubt they had taken from the Natchez, pushed on their trenches with more vigor, and approached more closely to the fort.

On the 24th, the Natchez, perceiving that the French were preparing to storm the fort, and fearing the result, made propositions of peace. Périer answered that he would hold no communication with them, unless they did, as a preliminary proceeding, deliver up all the black slaves they had in their possession, and unless their chiefs came out to have a personal interview with him, midway between the fort and the camp. The Natchez immediately gave up nineteen negroes and one negress, and said that there remained only six negroes, who had

gone out on a hunting excursion with some of their people. After much hesitation, founded on misgivings which proved to be correct, it was also agreed that Périer's other demand should be complied with; and the Great Sun, the Little Sun, and the chief of the Corn Village came out, at four o'clock in the afternoon, to meet the French chief. After the usual exchange of mutual salutations had taken place, as it began to rain, Périer proposed to the Indian chiefs to enter into a cabin close by, which seemed to be deserted, but as soon as they crossed its threshold, they were surrounded by armed soldiers, and made prisoners. Night came on, the bad weather increased, and, at twelve o'clock, had become a frightful tempest. The chief of the Corn Village availed himself of that circumstance, and, although shut up in a tent under the guard of twelve men, contrived to escape, without being hurt by the shots which were aimed at him.

On the 25th, the storm continued to rage, and interfered very much with the evacuation of the fort, and the complete surrender of the Natchez, which at last had been agreed upon. However, in the course of the day, forty-five men, and four hundred and fifty women and children were, at different intervals, delivered up to the French, with all their baggage and effects. But night having set in, the rest of the Natchez made a sudden sally, and taking the French by surprise, made their escape without one shot being fired at them, so dark the night was, so deluge-like the rain, and so little disposed were the French, and even their red allies, to move from their quarters, and to expose themselves to the pitiless fury of the elements. The next morning, only two sick men and one woman were found in the fort. Périer says, in one of his dispatches, that the party that thus eluded his vigilance and effected

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such a successful retreat, in front of such overwhelming odds, consisted only of sixteen men and four women. But this was a willful misrepresentation of the truth, the object of which was to conceal his humiliation, and to impress his government with the belief that his success had been greater than it really was. It is not at all probable that the place where the Great Sun had taken refuge with so many women and children, was defended only, according to Périer's statement, by about sixty warriors. Other accounts inform us, that the number of warriors who thus baffled him, and slipped from his grasp, exceeded one hundred and fifty. Périer having, the next morning, sent his Indian allies in pursuit, they killed one Natchez, and took two whom they burned at the stake.

On the 26th and 27th, the army was employed in demolishing the fort, with its fortified outposts, and in burning all their materials. On the 28th, the French began their retrograde march, and encamped on the bank of Silver Bayou, or river. On the 29th, they embarked to return to the Mississippi, through Black River and Red River. In one of his dispatches, Périer bestows much praise on the conduct of all the men he had under his orders, and speaks in high terms of the emulation which existed among the several corps. But he skips very lightly over the manner in which he made the Indian chiefs prisoners. He, no doubt, felt that it was a shameful breach of faith, the mention of which would make him blush, and provoke indignation. However, he was a man of no half-way measures, and at least not over-scrupulous in his dealings with the Indians. As soon as he reached New Orleans, he sent the Great Sun, the Little Sun, the forty-five other male prisoners and the four hundred and fifty women and children to St. Domingo, where they were sold as slaves.

Among them was the princess "*Bras piqué*," who related all the circumstances of the conspiracy of the Natchez, in which she acted a part so friendly to the French.

With such stakes in his hands, it would seem that Périer might have played a better game with the Natchez, and have induced them to emigrate far beyond the French settlements, as a condition of his restoring to them their sovereign, their women and children. It is likely that these would have been considerations sufficiently powerful, to make them subscribe to all the conditions which would have been deemed necessary to secure the future tranquillity of the colony.

However, a different course of policy was pursued, and entailed upon the French a long train of ever-reviving difficulties. The Natchez, driven by their losses to the last stage of despair, instead of being cowed, were nerved to frenzy by their misfortunes. They thought of nothing but revenge, cost what it might, and they committed more depredations than during the past. Diron d'Artaguet, in one of his dispatches, said that the Natchez, far from being destroyed as it had been represented, numbered still three hundred warriors, who had escaped from the grasp of the French, and who panted for their blood. After their last defeat near Black River, some of the scattered remnants of that tribe having incorporated themselves with the Chickasaws, were incessantly engaged in marauding expeditions directed against their white foes. In the month of April, 1731, they attacked four boats which Governor Périer had sent up to Arkansas. At the first fire from the Indians, the commanding officer had two of his men killed and two wounded, and although he had seventy men under his orders, so numerous were the Indians, that he was obliged to fall back,

and to avoid the contest. Governor Périer having sent an emissary to the Chickasaws to demand of them, that they should dismiss the Natchez under pain of his displeasure, these Indians answered proudly that they would know how to protect those to whom the hospitality of their tribe had been tendered and pledged. Thus, a Chickasaw war had risen from the ashes of the Natchez war. Attempts were made to induce the Choctaws to pronounce themselves against the Chickasaws. "But," said Diron d'Artaguet on this subject, "how can we ever succeed, when we have nothing in our possession to tempt those Indians to become our allies, when we are without resources, without provisions, and have every thing to fear."

Beauchamp, who commanded at Mobile, writing to his government on this matter, expressed himself thus: "The Choctaws are not disposed favorably, which is the more to be regretted from the fact that, should this nation declare itself against us, we should be obliged to abandon the colony, provided however we had time to do so. Since the departure of Bienville, all the Indians are spoiled. In spite of the augmentation of merchandise we have to supply them with, and of the reduction in the quantity of furs which they give us back in return, they are not satisfied. On the contrary, they are insolent and less tractable. Our war with the Natchez was a source of vexation and danger only to our traders on the Mississippi, but the Chickasaw war is a cause of uneasiness and apprehension to the whole colony. These Indians had sent three emissaries to the Illinois to urge them to side against us, but these emissaries have been delivered into our hands, and M. Périer intends to have them burnt."

To increase the troubles of the French, the Alibamons and Talapouches, at the instigation of the

Chickasaws, who had gone over to the British interest, had been on the eve of declaring themselves against the Choctaws, who were the only allies whose assistance the French hoped to have. "If such an event had taken place," continues Beauchamp, "the colony would have been on fire. The English are evidently gaining ground upon us." He then goes on inveighing bitterly against Périer's administration, and the system of policy this officer had assumed toward the Indians. In conclusion, he says: "The evil is now without a remedy, unless M. de Bienville could come back. Perhaps he could succeed in changing the state of things, on account of the consideration which the Indians have always had for him, and of the services which he has rendered them, particularly to the Choctaws."

After a minute description of the situation of the colony, Beauchamp closes thus his remarks to the minister: "You see to what a state of things is reduced this colony, which has so long been groaning under a harsh command. The colonists are in a miserably wretched condition, and are ill supplied with the provisions and the merchandise they want. When flour is sent here, the heads of the colony take hold of it, as they do with all the brandy and cordials which are imported, and they do not part with these articles except at exorbitant prices. It is, after all, what they do for every sort of merchandise. The soldiers, also, have always had just causes of complaint against the company with regard to their food and clothing. I need not speak of the enormous profits made by the company on every thing of which it permitted the sale in the colony." This compendious but graphic description is sufficient to show the disease which preyed on the vitals of Louisiana, and which was keeping her in such a protracted state of consumptive languor. Beauchamp's

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comments on Périer's harshness were certainly deserved, so far at least as the dealings of this officer with the Indians are taken into consideration. His consigning them to the stake and fagot, or his selling them into bondage, were measures of no soothing character, and it is not astonishing that Beauchamp should have drawn the conclusion, that the return of the mild and humane Bienville, as governor, would be looked upon by the Indians as a boon of conciliation.

Such being the course of events, in Louisiana, it is not to be wondered at that the great India Company, the creation of which had produced such a ferment on account of the prodigies it was expected to work in the production of wealth, drooping under the infliction of so many disappointments and the load of so many obligations, should have been anxious to waive the monopoly of trade, and all the other privileges it had obtained to colonize Louisiana. After receiving the melancholy intelligence of the Natchez massacre, the directors of the company and the stockholders, almost unanimously, came to the conclusion that they could no longer support the expenses which were necessary to keep up the colony, and on the 23d of January, 1731, they proposed to the king to return into his hands the charter which they at last found to be too onerous. They alledged in their petition that, in profitless attempts to carry this charter into execution, they had already spent twenty millions of livres, and that they would completely break down under the obligations they had assumed, if the government did not come to their relief. This proposition gave rise to a series of negotiations, and to various transactions between the government and the company, which are not of sufficient interest to be related. But the proposed retrocession became at last final, and the government must be con



sidered as having entirely resumed the administration of the colony, on the 15th of November, when it issued several ordinances relative to the winding up of the affairs of the company. Two delegates, Bruslé and Bru, were appointed by the king to proceed to Louisiana, to liquidate and settle the accounts of the company with the government and with individuals; and the creditors of the company in the colony were ordered to present their claims *there* to the delegates, for examination, approbation, and payment, those creditors being prohibited from suing the company in Europe for any debt contracted in Louisiana.

The company had, in payment of its debts, emitted a considerable quantity of bonds, called "*billets de caisse*," which had gradually become part of the currency of the country, and which were in daily use. But on the 15th of November, Governor Périer and the commissary of marine, Salmon, issued an ordinance which declared that, considering that such a currency as the company's bonds or *billets de caisse* interfered with the intrinsic value of the king's coin, and that at the same time it being the wish of his majesty that the holders of these bonds should have the faculty to pay with them the debts contracted while they were the currency of the country, it was decreed that they might still be used during fifteen days from the date of the ordinance, after which time they should be null and void, and withdrawn from circulation. A fine of twenty livres was to be inflicted, for the first offense, on any person convicted of having dealt in these bonds as currency, after the time specified, and corporal punishment was to be the penalty for a second violation of the ordinance by the same person. The effect of this measure was to depreciate these bonds, and their sudden withdrawal from the money-market produced in



the currency a vacuum which was sensibly felt. Hence a financial crisis which greatly added to the already existing distress of the colonists.

Thus did the India Company close her career after a laborious existence of fourteen years. She had failed as signally as her predecessor, Crozat, although, having superior means, she had accomplished more for the colony. She had founded New Orleans, which she had so named in compliment to her great patron, the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France, and she had made important settlements at Natchez, at the Tchoupitoulas, Cannes Brulées, Baton Rouge, Manchac, and Pointe Coupée. She had taken Louisiana with a white population of about five hundred souls and twenty negroes, and she left it with a population of five thousand whites and about two thousand five hundred negroes. It is to be remembered, however, that, for the last ten years since 1721, the white population had remained stationary; the negroes alone had increased, their number having swollen from about six hundred to over two thousand. The fact is, that the financial schemes of John Law had given to the colonization of Louisiana by a company, an impetus which was destined to cease by the collapse of the bubbles from which the attempt had originated. Unfortunately, the colonization of Louisiana had not been a great national enterprise, undertaken by patriotism and carried on by enlightened statesmanship. It was a stock-jobbing operation, a mere money-making speculation a bait thrown out to greedy stockholders, and, like most speculations of this kind, it ended in ruin. It had only the honor of being a splendid deception; it blazed out like a meteor, but to be soon swallowed up by obscurity.

The king having agreed to take on his own account all the property of the company in Louisiana, an inven-

tory of what it possessed was made under the direction of Salmon, the king's commissary, and the estimate of what it was found to be worth was fixed at two hundred and sixty-three thousand livres. This property consisted of some merchandise, and of a brick kiln in front of the city, with two hundred and sixty slaves, fourteen horses, and eight thousand barrels of rice. The negroes were valued, on an average, at seven hundred livres a piece, the horses at fifty-seven livres, and the rice at three livres per hundred pounds.

The Superior Council of Louisiana was reorganized by letters patent of the 7th of May, 1732, and was composed in the following manner:—Governor Périer, Salmon, the king's commissary, Loubois and D'Artaguet, *lieutenants de roi*, or the king's lieutenant-governors, Major Benac, commander of New Orleans, Fazende, Bruslé, Bru, Lafreniere, Prat, Raguet, and Fleuriau, who had been reappointed attorney-general. It will be remembered that he had lost his office, in 1726, for having resisted the authority of De la Chaise, the king's commissary. Rossart was appointed secretary of the council.

In order to revive commerce, which had been completely destroyed by the monopoly conceded to the India Company, the king granted several privileges and advantages to such of his subjects as would send vessels to Louisiana. Thus, by an ordinance of the 13th of September, he exempted from duty the merchandise exported from France to Louisiana, and the produce of Louisiana imported into France.

This was, at last, taking one step in the right path, and doing what ought to have been done long before, instead of allowing to one man, or one company, in violation of all the rules of common sense and justice, a monopoly which did not even benefit the grantees.

But as soon as it was known that the trade with Louisiana was open to competition, the merchants of St. Malo, of Bordeaux, of Marseilles, and of the Cap Français began to make preparations to try this new market.

The government fixed the number of regulars to be maintained in the colony at eight hundred men, and, by several ordinances, attempted to prevent the many fluctuations to which the metallic currency of the colony was subject.

Bienville was reappointed governor of Louisiana in the place of Périer, who was subsequently raised to the rank of lieutenant-general as a reward for his services, and his brother Salverte shared the same promotion. Périer had been over six years governor of the colony, and retired with the reputation of a man of integrity and talent, but of stern disposition, and of manners somewhat bordering on roughness. There was at the bottom of his character a fund of harshness from which the Indians had but too much to suffer, and which made itself felt even by his French subordinates.

Bienville, much to his own satisfaction and to the gratification of the colonists, returned to Louisiana in 1733, after an absence of eight years. The surrender of the company's charter, the resumption of the administration of the colony by the king, and the return of Bienville, were circumstances which gladdened their hearts, and inspired them with high hopes of approaching and permanent prosperity.

On the 18th of March, an ordinance of the king fixed the price at which the farmers-general in France were bound to receive the tobacco from Louisiana. The rates were:—35 livres per hundred pounds for 1733; 30 livres for 1734 and 1735; 27 livres for 1736 and 1737; and 25 livres for 1738. Thus the government reserved to itself the right of being the sole purchaser

of the tobacco raised in Louisiana, and to pay no more than what it thought proper to give, whatever might be the cost of producing the article, and its intrinsic value in the market. Such was one of the thousand absurdities and flagrant injustices of the suicidal system applied by France to her colonies! The blasting influence which it had on Louisiana can be easily conceived; and it is not astonishing that Diron d'Artaquette, who had gone to France and had returned in company with Bienville, should have found the colony in the situation which he thus describes, in a dispatch of the 23d of April from Mobile. "I have found on my arrival at this place," says he, "two contagious diseases: first, the small-pox, which has carried off and is still killing, every day, a considerable number of persons of both sexes and of every age; and next, a general dearth of provisions, from which every body is suffering, and which has been the result of the destruction of the late crop by a hurricane. Our planters and mechanics here are dying of hunger, and those at New Orleans are in no better situation. Some are clamorous for returning to France; others secretly run away to the Spaniards at Pensacola. The colony is on the eve of being depopulated." Such was the situation of the colony thirty-four years after its foundation, in a country blessed with such fertility as Louisiana! From the very first days of its existence it had continued to struggle against the chilling grasp of famine, and complaints of starvation had been wafted across the ocean by every wind which blew in the direction of the mother country. Such a state of things denotes a profound, a radical vice in the organization and administration of the colony. Active, indeed, must have been the worm concealed in the roots of the tree which had been transported into such a luxuriant soil, and which, instead of

growing to its natural size and to maturity, instead of embellishing and enriching the country with its flowers and fruits, could hardly feed its puny trunk with sufficient sap to continue to live in sickly vegetation. It requires, however, no very sagacious eye to discover that what it wanted was the atmosphere of Liberty, which was pumped away by the pneumatic engine of a despotic and imbecile government.

On the 12th of May, Bienville and Salmon, the king's commissary, sent to France a joint dispatch in which they informed the government, that the colonists were very dilatory in producing their titles of concession in order to have them confirmed, as required by the ordinance issued on the 30th of December, 1723, and they recommended that new titles be granted in the name of the king, not only to those who claimed under concessions from the company, but also to those whose claims rested on nothing else but possession. "The country is good," they wrote, "but, like all new countries, is liable to sudden atmospherical changes, and to some confusion of seasons. Besides, the colonists lack experience, and are not sufficiently well settled on their plantations, which are not as yet properly organized. They are in want of negroes, and they complain of their being obliged to pay for the goods they need, two hundred per cent. above what those articles cost the traders. They also complain of the number of useless vagabonds who have been sent here by the company." Speaking of the Ursuline nuns, they said:—"They are very industrious and disinterested; they are much occupied, and live on little." So minute were the details which they went into, that they informed the government that the first child born in the colony, and consequently "*the first Creole*," was named Claude Jousset, and was

the son of a Canadian who carried on a small trading business at Mobile.

From a long dispatch which Bienville wrote on the 15th of May, on the situation and disposition in which he found the Indians, it seems that all the tribes in Louisiana were very much disaffected, not excepting even those over whom St. Denis exercised so much influence. "The commander of the fort at Natchitoches," said he, informs me that the Indians have shown an inclination to rebel, and have compelled him to keep himself shut up during six months, and that, although they show themselves more peaceably disposed, yet he still keeps on his guard. In a word it seems that the colony is threatened on every side, and it is, in fact, the custom of the Indian tribes to become hostile in imitation of one another. I hope, however, to restore in Louisiana that tranquillity which she enjoyed when I left her in 1725. Since my arrival, the Natchez have attempted nothing against the French nor against their allies; but they are not destroyed, although we are ignorant of their numbers. The Tunicas have assured me that these indefatigable enemies of the French are divided into three bands: one, the least numerous, has retired into an impracticable country, a little above their ancient villages; the second, which is more considerable, dwells on the banks of the Mississippi, near the Ouatchitas, and opposite the Yazoo River; the third, which is the most numerous, has been received among the Chickasaws, who have granted to these refugees lands on which to build a village. I shall take care that they be constantly attacked and harassed by our Indian allies."

With regard to the Chickasaws, he wrote: "If we can not gain over this nation, it will be necessary to drive it away from the territory of the colony." True

to this policy, he induced the Choctaws to set up an expedition against the Chickasaws, and after informing his government of this fact in a communication dated the 26th of July, he added: "It would have been proper to join a body of French troops to the Indians, in order to attack the forts of the Chickasaws, and to achieve some glorious feat, which is an indispensable thing to restore in the colony that healthy tone and self-reliance which it has lost. But we are too poor and without forces, and we must not expose ourselves to fail a second time in any enterprise of the kind. The colony is in such a state of indigence, that, last year, the people were obliged during more than three months to live on the *seeds and grains of reeds*. Much to my regret, therefore, I am condemned to inaction." It is hardly possible to conceive how the country could have been reduced to such a pitch of misery, and such representations can not but be suspected of gross exaggeration. *The seeds and grains of reeds*, of which Bienville speaks, must have been figurative expressions.

On the 10th of August, Bienville informed the French government, that the Natchez who were on the banks of the Mississippi, and who composed the two bands of which it has been spoken, were so effectually harassed by incessant attacks from the Indians he had set upon them, that they were all retreating toward the Chickasaws, to join the third band which had there found shelter and protection.

The whole year 1734 was spent in fruitless negotiations, to induce the Choctaws to make a serious attack upon the Chickasaws, and the dispatches of the time frequently mention a Choctaw chief, called the *Red Shoe*, who acted a conspicuous part in all these transactions, and who, it seems, was constantly oscillating between the French and the English, playing off one



interest against the other, selling himself to the highest bidder, and shuffling his cards to his best advantage, in a manner which would have elicited the approbation of Machiavel himself.

Diron d'Artaguet, who commanded at Mobile, asked leave of Bienville to muster one hundred Frenchmen, and with them to put himself at the head of the Choctaws, to march against the Chickasaws; he was greatly irritated at Bienville's refusal on the ground of the want of arms and provisions, and because such forces were too weak to insure success, considering also that the disposition of the Choctaws was doubtful, and therefore that they might prove traitors. It was vainly represented to D'Artaguet, that with such a deficiency of means he would endanger his reputation and that of the French arms. He remained convinced that a feeling of jealousy was at the bottom of this non-compliance with his demand. This conviction was increased when he saw Lesueur, at the head of thirty Frenchmen and one thousand Choctaws, depart to wage war upon the Chickasaws. But Bienville answered his complaints by observing, that if this expedition was defeated, it would bring no discredit or shame on the French, as there were so very few of them engaged in it. The Choctaws had obtained considerable presents from the French to march, and when they arrived in front of the forts of the Chickasaws, being bribed off by those they came to attack, they marched back without striking a blow, with the exception of *Red Shoe*, who showed some conscience, and who, having been paid by the French to fight, resolved to gain his money. At the head of a small band of trusty followers, he stealthily approached one of the villages, and poured a volley of bullets into the cabins. But he was immediately attacked by forces immensely superior to his



own, and closely pursued by about two hundred men, the distance of twenty miles. He escaped, however, after having lost four men, among whom was the brother of the great chief of the Choctaws.

On hearing of the unsuccessful termination of this expedition, Bienville convened a meeting of the Choctaws at Mobile, and upbraided them for their want of faith. They all apologized in humble terms for their conduct, with the exception of Red Shoe, who spoke with arrogance, and exalted too much what he had done. Bienville affected to be highly displeased at his presumption, and reprimanded him roughly. However, he made to the chiefs some presents, which were necessarily small on account of the penury in which he was, and he renewed with them the old treaties of alliance. The conditions on which merchandise was to be furnished to the Choctaws were agreed upon, and they, in their turn, solemnly promised to hold no communication with the English. It was exceedingly important for the French to secure the support of this powerful tribe, which Bienville represents as owning fifty-two large villages scattered over a circumference of three hundred miles. Hence Bienville bitterly and incessantly complained of not being supplied with sufficient means to command, by the required presents, the allegiance of these Indians.

Unfortunately for the colony, the misunderstanding which had broken out between Bienville and D'Artaquette became every day more marked and serious in its character. They were both, however, men of distinguished merit, and ought to have understood and appreciated each other. But it seemed, as for the past, that harmony could never exist long between the chiefs of the colony. Thus D'Artaquette, in one of his dispatches, of the 29th of April, 1735, assures his govern-

ment, that if Bienville is displeased with and complains of him, it is because he, D'Artaguet, has made known the misconduct of Bienville's protégés, or favorites, Lesueur and the Jesuit, Father Beaudoin, *who, to the great scandal of the Choctaws, seduce their women.*

Be it for this cause, or for another, it is certain that, notwithstanding the treaty of alliance which had been recently renewed, and the presents they had received, the Choctaws were divided into two factions, one of which was hostile to the French, and the other in favor of the English, who, for many years, had been struggling to gain over that nation to their interest, and to trade with it exclusively of the French.

In the mean time, the Chickasaws and the Natchez, united in one body, were not inactive, and never failed to attack the French whenever the opportunity was favorable. The imagination may well be permitted to conceive, that the long series of misfortunes heaped upon the Natchez had produced some Hannibal of the wilderness, who sought everywhere for avengers of his nation's wrongs, and who thought that

"What though the field be lost,  
All is not lost:—the unconquerable will  
And study of revenge, immortal hate,  
And courage never to submit or yield,  
And what is else not to be overcome."

MILTON.

De Coulanges had been ordered up the river to carry ammunition to young D'Artaguet, who had so distinguished himself when the Natchez were besieged by Loubois, and who had since been intrusted with the command of the Illinois district. He had the imprudence not to obey strictly his orders, and to transport merchandise belonging to some officers, instead of a considerable quantity of powder, which he left behind to make room for the other article. Disappointed at

not receiving the ammunition of which he stood much in need, D'Artaguettes dispatched in quest of it an officer, named Du Coder, with ten men. Before reaching the Arkansas district, they were attacked by two hundred and forty Chickasaw and Natchez warriors, who killed eight of the soldiers, and made prisoners Du Coder, a sergeant, and a soldier. Speaking of this untoward event, Bienville said: "I have ordered D'Artaguettes to imprison De Coulanges for six months in Fort Chartres, and I would have interdicted this officer, if I had not taken into consideration his past services, particularly in the last Natchez war. I hope that this example will be sufficient to moderate the avidity for gain, which some of our officers have imbibed in the service of the company."

It seems, however, that the Chickasaws had become anxious for peace, and they invited Du Coder, their prisoner, to write to that effect to Bienville: they also set free the soldier they had captured. He soon reached New Orleans, and informed Bienville that the Chickasaws had treated kindly their white prisoners, who had been conducted through the Indian villages with a white stick in their hands, and thoroughly washed in public from head to foot, as a token of life being granted to them. Through this soldier they again sued for peace, and begged to be protected against the marauding attacks of the Indian allies of the French. Bienville wrote back to Du Coder to try to escape\* with the sergeant his companion, because he could not grant peace to the Chickasaws, and *could not sacrifice the glory and interests of the French nation to the safety of two men*. Thus it is evident that he had taken the resolution, to come to no terms with the Chickasaws, and to drive them away from the colony.

\* Du Coder took the advice, and escaped shortly after with his companion.

But though he had determined on a war of extermination, he was obliged to postpone all operations, and he wrote to the French minister of Marine: "I beg your excellency not to forget that I can hardly set on foot two hundred men, and that I can not rely on the Indians, who have given us so many proofs of their cowardice in the expeditions I have induced them to undertake against the Chickasaws. I dare not then, with such means as I have, expose the honor of our arms against a warlike nation, numbering, at least, four hundred and fifty warriors. I have learned from the soldier they sent me back, that they have five palisaded forts, and besides, for every ten cabins in their villages, one that is fortified with three lines or rows of stakes provided with loopholes, and terraced in such a way as to be fire-proof. All these cabins are so situated as to protect one another. The Natchez, who still number one hundred and eighty warriors, have a village of their own contiguous to those of the Choctaws. Besides the fortified cabins and the five forts I have mentioned, the Chickasaws have a larger one with four bastions, which they have constructed with the trunks of trees stuck into the ground, in imitation of the one we had among the Natchez when they revolted. Such are the offensive and defensive means of our enemies. Hence you can judge what we can do. Were I to march against them with the whole colony at my heels, I could not hope for success. I can not therefore undertake any thing lightly. I request, *again and forever*, an augmentation of four companies. I will do however all I can, to continue to harass the Chickasaws with incursions from our red allies. But it is absolutely necessary that some bold and remarkable blow be struck, to impress the Indians with a proper sense of respect and duty toward us."

At that time, it was reported that the British faction among the Choctaws had gained so much ground as to prevail upon that nation to make war upon the French, and to attack Mobile. This gave rise to great alarm in that settlement, where the inhabitants, under the apprehension of immediate danger, never went out of their houses without being well provided with arms, *and even did not go to church to hear mass without having their guns on their shoulders*, as stated in one of Bienville's dispatches. So intense became their fears, that they prepared to abandon the place, and to retire to New Orleans. But Bienville sent them positive orders not to leave their habitations, and assured them that they had nothing to fear. In one of his dispatches he accused Diron d'Artaguet of being the cause of the discontent which had spread among the Choctaws, by the harsh manner in which he had treated some warriors of that nation who had come to Mobile, to have their arms repaired and put in order.

A short time after, on the 16th of July, a smuggling vessel from Jamaica appeared in Mobile Bay, and anchored at twelve miles from the fort. D'Artaguet ordered her to leave the bay, and on her captain delaying to obey, sent Lieutenant De Velles in an armed boat with thirty men, to take possession of the vessel, which had a very inoffensive look, but which, nevertheless, opened such an effective fire on the boat as she approached, that De Velles, having seventeen of his men killed or wounded in an instant, was obliged to retreat, and to allow his enemy to gain the open sea without further molestation. This circumstance again gave to Bienville an opportunity to tax D'Artaguet with gross imprudence and carelessness. In fact, a fierce war of angry accusations and recriminations was now kept up between these two antagonists, and had succeeded the

intimacy which had existed between them during many years.

The settlement of the company's affairs in the colony proved to be of no small difficulty. The stockholders complained that the just debts due to the company could not be recovered, because the debtors were favored by the only judicial tribunal in the country, the members of the council, who themselves were indebted to the company. Considering this state of things, the king, by an ordinance of the 16th of October, 1733, appointed the royal commissary, Salmon, the sole judge to pronounce in the last resort between the company and its debtors or creditors in Louisiana.

Since 1723, when the company had introduced into the colony a paper currency, during the existence of which the dollar had risen in value to 35 livres, a bottle of brandy to 30 livres, a pair of shoes to 35 livres of that paper money, and so on in proportion for every other merchandise, a vast amount of debts had been contracted under that monetary system between the colonists, and between the company and individuals. Now that the government had withdrawn from circulation all the paper money of the company, by receiving it in payment of goods, debtors contended that their debts ought to be reduced to one half, considering that they were under the necessity of making their payments in a currency much more valuable than the one in existence when they had contracted their obligations. Individuals generally submitted to transactions of this kind, but the company, which was much more of a creditor than of a debtor, refused to admit the justice and application of this rule. Salmon was in favor of the proposed reduction, but hesitated to enforce it, and was satisfied with making recommendations to compromise. Thus matters stood for some time.

The French government thought it a heavy burden to provide for the expenses of the colony in hard coin, and, in 1734, consulted Bienville and Salmon on the emission of paper money (*papier de cartes*). They were opposed to it altogether, but not venturing to express the opinion that it ought not to be emitted at all, they advised that the measure be postponed for two years. In support of this opinion, they described the aversion which existed in the colony against this kind of currency, and the want of confidence with which it would be received; they represented that when the company surrendered its charter, its paper was depreciated to half its original value, and that such had been the fate of every paper currency in the colony since its foundation; that it would drive away the precious metals, make the dollar, as it had been seen once, rise up to 35 livres, and open the door again to the most disastrous stock-jobbing operations, and to the foulest demoralization, and that no more would be required to cause the desertion and total ruin of the country. "We have seen," said Bienville in one of his dispatches, "that one who has paper money in his pocket, will spend it more easily than hard coin, and that, when such is the currency of the country, every one consumes all he earns without any thought of *to-morrow*." Bienville wrote these remarkable lines in 1734. True they were at that time, and that truth was still more energetically demonstrated by what occurred in Louisiana a century later, when it was her curse to be overflowed with a deluge of bank notes. It is easy, however, to conceive the anxiety which the government felt, in 1734, to pay its expenses in paper, when it is known that those expenses amounted, during that year, to 898,245 livres for this puny colony of five thousand souls.



On the 15th of April, 1735, Bienville wrote, on the state of the colony: "One hundred thousand pounds of tobacco are made at Pointe Coupée; two women raise silk-worms for amusement, and succeed very well; eggs should be sent by the government to the Ursulines, who would teach this industry to the orphans whose education is intrusted to them. The cultivation of cotton is advantageous, but the planters experience great difficulty in clearing it from the seeds. Pitch and tar are made in some abundance. I neglect nothing to turn the attention of the inhabitants to agricultural pursuits, but in general they are worthless, lazy, dissolute, and most of them recoil from the labors necessary to improve the lands." To those inhabitants who were represented as lazy and dissolute, the year 1735 was not a favorable one, for Bienville and Salmon, in a joint dispatch of the 31st of August, say: "The mortality of cattle is frightful, the drought is excessive, and the heat is suffocating. Such hot weather has never been known since the foundation of the colony, and it has now lasted four months without any change. From Christmas to the St. John the waters were very high, so that many levees were broken. The one which is in front of the city gave way, and we were very near abandoning our houses and taking lodgings in boats. Then the drought came, and the river went down fifteen feet—a circumstance which had never been seen before. Hence the mediocrity of our crops, our lands having been under water in the planting season."

While the planters were suffering from drought, after having suffered from inundation, the inhabitants of New Orleans were laboring under a strange kind of infliction. They could hardly venture out of their houses without being bit by mad dogs. These animals had increased to such an extent, that they had become an intolerable



nuisance, and to remedy the evil, the royal commissary, Salmon, ordered them to be hunted down on certain days, from five o'clock until six in the morning. He also prohibited negroes and Indians from having dogs, under the penalty for the offender of being sentenced to wear an iron collar.

The colony had always undergone great inconvenience from the want of carpenters, cabinet-makers, tailors, shoemakers, and mechanics of every description. To obviate this difficulty, an ordinance was issued freeing from his military engagement any French or Swiss soldier, if he was a handicraftsman, provided he agreed to remain in the colony, and to exercise his calling.

The troops, which so far had not been supplied with suitable quarters, were, this year, comfortably lodged in barracks, which Bienville and Salmon had ordered, on the 12th of July, 1734, to be constructed on both sides of the public square in the city of New Orleans.

The latter part of 1735, and the beginning of 1736, were marked by great military preparations in the colony. The French government had sent to Bienville a few additional troops, and notwithstanding the doubts he had expressed on the final success of an expedition against the Chickasaws, except it be with such ample means as the government did not seem disposed to grant, had ordered him to undertake one, as soon as possible, against that nation, and to drive it away from the country. In obedience to these instructions, Bienville had sent word to the younger D'Artaguet, the commander of the Illinois district, to collect all the French and Indian forces he could muster, and to meet him on the 31st of March, 1736, at the Chickasaw villages. In the month of January of that year, Bienville drew from Natchez, Natchitoches, and the Balize all the officers and soldiers he could spare without weakening too

much the garrisons stationed at those places. He formed a company of volunteers, composed of traders and transient persons then in New Orleans, and another company of unmarried men belonging to the city, and which was called the *company of bachelors*. A depot of ammunition, provisions, and all that was necessary for the intended campaign was established on the Tombekbee, at the distance of two hundred and seventy miles from Mobile, where the several detachments of the army were successively sent through the Lakes, as fast as conveyances could be procured. Several large vessels containing provisions and utensils of every sort were dispatched down the Mississippi to Mobile, and on the 4th of March, Bienville departed from New Orleans, leaving behind him only four companies of regulars under Noyan, which were to follow him as soon as they could be transported. The boats having to struggle against adverse winds, the whole of the French forces did not reach Mobile before the 22d, and it was only on the 28th, that the last of the vessels carrying provisions entered the harbor, when it was discovered that her cargo had been much damaged by the sea. On the 1st of April, the expedition left Mobile, and it was only on the 23d that the army reached the Tombekbee depot, after having had to contend against currents, freshets, storms, and constant rains.

There, while waiting for the arrival of the Choctaws, Bienville reviewed his troops, which were found to consist of five hundred and forty-four white men, excluding the officers, and of forty-five negroes, commanded by free blacks, the balance being composed of Indians. The principal officers were De Léry, D'Hauterive, De Lusser, De Courtillas, Petit, Berthel, De Bombelles, Benac, Le Blanc, De Membrede, De Macarty, De St. Pierre, De Velles, De Bouillé, Des Marets, De Contre

Cœur de St. Protais, Pontalba, Vanderek, Montbrun, and Noyan. At the head of the Swiss companies were Volant and Du Parc; Montmolin was their standard-bearer. The detachments of the militia were commanded by Lesueur and St. Martin.

The Choctaws, to the number of six hundred, having come at last, the army, after innumerable delays and difficulties, resumed its march, and on the 22d of May encamped at about twenty-seven miles from the Chickasaw villages. On the 23d, at daybreak, Bienville had a certain number of trees cut down to make stakes, and ordered the construction of fortifications for the protection of the boats. Leaving in those fortifications the general store-keeper, the captains of the boats, some sick men, and twenty soldiers under the command of Vanderek, on the 24th in the afternoon, and after having ordered the troops to take provisions for twelve days, he marched six miles further, where he encamped for the night, which was very tempestuous. On the 25th, within the space of twelve miles, the army had to cross successively three deep ravines running through a thick cane-brake, and had to wade through water rising up to the waist. The army then emerged on a beautiful and open prairie, on the edge of which they encamped, at the distance of six miles from the villages.

The intention of Bienville was to turn round those villages of the Chickasaws, to march upon the village of the Natchez, which was in the rear, and to attack first those whom he considered as the instigators of the Chickasaw war. But the Choctaws insisted with such pertinacity upon attacking the villages which were nearer, and which, they said, contained more provisions than that of the Natchez; and they represented with such warmth, that, in the needy condition in which they were, it was absolutely necessary they should take pos-

session of these provisions, that Bienville yielded to their importunities. The prairie in which these villages were situated covered a space of about six miles. The villages were small, and built in the shape of a triangle, on a hillock sloping down to a brook which was almost dry; further off was the main body of the Chickasaw villages, and the smaller ones seemed to be a sort of vanguard. The Choctaws having informed Bienville that he would find water nowhere else, he ordered the army to file off close to the wood which enclosed the prairie, in order to reach another hillock that was in sight. There the troops halted to rest and take nourishment. It was past twelve o'clock.

The Indian scouts whom Bienville had sent in every direction to look for tidings of D'Artaguet, whom he had expected to operate his junction with him on this spot, had come back and brought no information. It was evident, therefore, that he could no longer hope for the co-operation on which he had relied, and that he had to trust only to his own resources. It was impossible to wait; and immediate action was insisted upon by the Choctaws and the French officers, who thought that the three small villages which have been described, and which were the nearest to them, were not susceptible of much resistance. Bienville yielded to the solicitations of his allies and of his troops, and at two in the afternoon, ordered his nephew Noyan to begin the attack, and to put himself at the head of a column composed of a company of grenadiers, of detachments of fifteen men taken from each one of the eight companies of French regulars, of sixty-five men of the Swiss troops and forty-five volunteers.

The French had approached within carbine shot of the forts, and at that distance, could plainly distinguish Englishmen, who appeared to be very active in assist-

ing the Chickasaws in preparing their defense, and who had hoisted up their flag on one of the forts. Bienville recommended that they should not be assailed if they thought proper to retire, and to give them time should they feel so disposed, he ordered to confine the attack to the village named Ackia, which was the most remote from the one under the English flag.

The order for the attack being given, the division commanded by Noyan, moved briskly on, and under the protection of mantelets carried by the company of negroes, arrived safely at the foot of the hill on which the villages stood. But there, one of the negroes being killed, and another wounded, the rest flung down the mantelets, and took to their heels. The French pushed on, and penetrated into the village, with the company of grenadiers at their head. But being no longer under cover, and much exposed to the fire of the enemy, their losses were very heavy. The noble and brilliant Chevalier de Contre Cœur, a favorite in the army, was killed, and a number of soldiers shared his fate, or were disabled. However, three of the principal fortified cabins were carried by the impetuosity of the French, with several smaller ones which were burned. But as a pretty considerable intervening space remained to be gone over, to assail the chief fort and the other fortified cabins, when it became necessary to complete the success obtained, Noyan, who had headed the column of attack, turning round, saw that he had with him only the officers belonging to the head of the column, some grenadiers, and a dozen of volunteers. The troops had been dismayed by the death of Captain De Lusser, with many of his grenadiers, including a sergeant, who had fallen when they had attempted to cross the space separating the last cabin taken from the next

to be taken. Seeking for shelter against the galling fire of the enemy, the French had clustered behind the cabins of which they had already taken possession, and it was impossible for the officers who commanded the tail of the column, to drive them away, either by threats, promises, or words of exhortation, from their secure position. Putting themselves at the head of a few of their best soldiers, in order to encourage the rest, the officers resolved to make a desperate attempt to storm the fortified blockhouse they had in front of them. But in an instant, their commander the Chevalier de Noyan, D'Hauterive, the captain of the grenadiers, Grondel, lieutenant of the Swiss, De Velles, Montbrun, and many other officers, were disabled. Still keeping his ground, De Noyan sent his aid-de-camp, De Juzan, to encourage and bring up to him the wavering soldiers who had slunk behind the cabins. But, in making the effort, this officer was killed, and his death increased the panic of the troops.

Grondel, who had fallen near the walls of the enemy, had been abandoned, and a party of Indians was preparing to sally out to scalp him, when a sergeant of the grenadiers, ashamed of the cowardice which had left an officer in this perilous and defenseless position, took with him four of his men, and rushed to the rescue of Grondel, without being intimidated by bullets as thick as hail. These five intrepid men reached in safety the spot where Grondel lay, and were in the act of lifting him up to carry him away, when a general discharge from the fort prostrated every one of them dead by the side of him they had come to save. But this noble deed was not lost upon the army: the electrical stroke had been given, and was responded to by the flashing out of another bright spark of heroism. A grenadier named Régnisse, rather inflamed than das-

tardized by the fate of his companions, dashed out of the ranks of his company, ran headlong to the place where Grondel lay weltering in his blood from the five wounds he had received, took him on his athletic shoulders, and carried him away in triumph amid the general acclamations, and the enthusiastic bravos of those who witnessed the feat. To the astonishment of all, he had the good luck to pass unscathed through the fire which was poured upon him by the enemy, but the inanimate body of Grondel which he was transporting received a sixth wound. So generously saved from the Indian tomahawk, this officer slowly recovered, and was subsequently raised to a high rank in the French army.

The spectacle then presented to the sight was truly of an exciting character. The village attacked was enveloped in a thick smoke, through which might be seen to emerge occasionally, a body of soldiers carrying away some of their wounded. Inside of the smoke, concealed behind the heavy logs of which their forts and cabins were made up, the Indians, firing through their loopholes, were uttering such appalling whoops and shouts, such blood-freezing shrieks and fiendish yells, that one would have thought that thousands of demons were rioting in one of their favorite haunts in Pandemonium. To complete the illusion, the six hundred Choctaws, with the other red allies of the French, almost in a state of nakedness, and painted all over in the most frightful colors, as they do when they go to war, to make themselves more hideously terrific, kept hovering on both wings of the French, at a safe distance from the balls of the enemy, while they fired at random into the vacant air, emulating the Chickasaws in the production only of horrific and unearthly sounds, gesticulating wildly, running and jumping, as if they



were delirious, and looking like maniac devils rather than men. One could have imagined that they were the rabble of hell, enraged and thrown into an insurrection, by being excluded from the feast prepared for their betters.

Noyan, seeing at last that he was exposing himself and his bravest companions in vain, and growing faint under the effects of his wound, ordered a retreat from the open field, and taking shelter in one of the cabins, sent word to Bienville, that he had lost about seventy men, of whom many were officers, and that if prompt relief was not afforded, no officer would be left standing on his feet, as they would all have to share the fate of those who had fallen: that himself, although from the nature of his wound in want of immediate assistance, would not venture to retire from the field of action, because he feared it would be the signal of a general scattering away.

On hearing this report, and on seeing the French and Swiss troops beginning to give ground, while demonstrations of an attack on their flank were visible in the direction of the great Indian villages which were further off at the extremity of the prairie, Bienville sent Beauchamp with a reserve of eighty men, to support the troops engaged, and to bring off the wounded and the dead. Beauchamp did not execute his orders without losing several men. One of his officers, by the name of Favrot, was wounded; and when Beauchamp reached the spot where the contest had been the fiercest, and which might, if the expression be allowed, be called the heart of the battle, he found all the officers nobly keeping their ground, and clustered in a solid mass, retaining possession with desperate energy of the foremost cabin they had gained, nearest to the fort of the enemy. Beauchamp gathered together all



the men who still remained on that bloody field, and retreated in good order toward the French camp, but he could not prevent some of the dead bodies from falling into the hands of the Indians, who, much to the horror of the French, impaled the naked corpses on their palisades. The Choctaws who, so far, had kept aside and left the French to shift for themselves, seeing them in full retreat, seemed disposed, out of bravado, to show to the white faces, that the red ones could do what the superior race had failed to execute, and marched upon the village as if determined to storm it. But as they approached, a general discharge from the enemy having brought down twenty-two of their men, they did not wait for another, and scampered away like whipped curs, much to the satisfaction and amusement of the French.

This engagement, which had begun at two o'clock in the afternoon, had lasted three hours. It had ceased for more than an hour and a half, when, on looking down on the lovely scene which then presented itself to the eye, one would have been struck with the contrast which it had offered not long before. To the well-known excitement, noise, turmoil, confusion, and incidents of a battle, had succeeded the most complete repose and the most absolute silence. The sun had gone down to rest behind the distant trees of the western horizon, and that portion of the sky through which he had lately trod, had remained gorgeously illuminated by the lingering rays which the eastern monarch had left behind him when he had disappeared. The richly dyed and variegated clouds, which rose up in a pyramid of splendor, looked as if they were the purple mantle and the other vestments which he had carelessly dropped from his shoulders when he had sought his repose. A sweet breeze was sighing and gently sweeping across

the prairie as if lulling tired nature to sleep. In the distance, the villages of the Chickasaws produced rather a picturesque effect, and were for the eye an agreeable resting-point in the landscape. Not a sound was to be heard coming from that direction. The Indians seemed to have dropped asleep in the lap of victory, under the protection of the proud banner of England, which floated over their heads. There was but one spot where a hollow murmuring sound might have been noticed. It was in the French camp, situated on the outskirts of the prairie, in the vicinity of the smaller Indian villages which the French had met on entering it, and which seemed to stand sentries for the main body of the larger villages. Encouraged by the silence which had been reigning for two hours, herds of deer were to be seen gracefully stealing away through the prairie, and its feathered tenants, such as partridges, woodcocks, and other birds were heard uttering, in their usual notes, their last farewell to the departing light of day, while seeking their downy nests in the perfumed grass enameled with myriads of wild flowers. The cattle of the Indians, which, frightened by the musketry and the shouts of the combatants, had fled into the neighboring woods, had returned to the prairie, and were seen browsing far and wide over that broad expanse of pasture. Invited by silence and solitude, a troop of horses, headed by a beautiful white mare, which seemed their queen, came leisurely on, to drink at the brook running at the foot of the hill, on which stood the Indian villages. A soft glow hung over the prairie, and it looked like a beautiful picture, of which the dark foliaged woods far off were the appropriate frame.

Not unmindful of the attractions of this truly southern scenery of the North American continent, and re-

posing under the broad canopy of a gigantic oak which stood a little in front of the French camp, a large group of officers were discussing the events of the day. With them was Simon, a free black, the commander of the company of negroes who had thrown down the mantelets they were carrying to protect the French in their attempt to storm the village of Ackia. Simon, when his men had fled, had stood his ground, and had remained with the French officers at the spot the most exposed, until the retreat was sounded. He was a sort of privileged character, and he was sorely vexed at the cowardice displayed by those of his color. The French officers, who were amused at his chagrin, and at the comical expressions in which it was vented, kept bantering him without mercy on his light-footed companions. Stung to the heart, Simon exclaimed: "A negro is as brave as any body, and I will show it to you." Seizing a rope which was dangling from one of the tents, he rushed headlong toward the horses which were quietly slaking their thirst under the protection of the muskets of the Indian villages. To reach the white mare, to jump on her back with the agility of a tiger, and to twist round her head and mouth the rope with which to control and rein her, was the affair of an instant. But that instant was enough for the apparently sleeping village to show itself wide awake, and that dark mass was seen as if spontaneously girding itself with a zone of fire, so rapid and thick were the flashes from its innumerable loopholes. But away dashed Simon with the rapidity of lightning; frantic with affright, madly reared and plunged the conquered mare under the strong hand of Simon, who forced her to take the direction of the French camp, where he arrived safely amid the cheering acclamations of the troops, and without having received a scratch from the

balls of the enemy. This noble feat silenced at once the jests of which Simon thought himself the victim.

The modest abnegation of the brave grenadier, Rég-nisse, who had so heroically saved Grondel, must not be omitted to be recorded also. When the battle was over, Bienville wanted to make him an officer on the spot, but Rég-nisse obstinately refused, saying that he did not know how to write, and that having no education, he was not worthy of the grade offered to him, and that every one of his brother grenadiers being capable of doing what he had done, he did not deserve and did not wish to be elevated above them; his scruples could not be overcome, but his comrades, joyfully admitting his superiority, insisted upon his name being put at the top of the roll of the company, and upon his taking the lead of them when under arms. On that day, he received from his companions the title of "*the first of the grenadiers*."

The prairie on which these events took place, was called "*Strawberry Plain*," on account of the quantity of the fruit of this name with which it was covered, and the battle was called "*the Battle of Ackia*," from the name of the village attacked.

After the severe repulse which the French had met with, nothing remained for them to do but to retreat. Writing on the causes of the failure of this expedition, and on the reasons which induced him not to renew the attack, Bienville said:—"What remains to add to the previous information given by me with regard to the fortifications which the Indians know how to make is, that after having surrounded their cabins with several rows of thick and large stakes, they dig the ground inside, and bury themselves up to the pit of their arms, which they keep free to fire through loopholes cut almost even with the ground. But they

departed from Tombecbee, where he left Captain De Berthel in command, with a garrison of thirty Frenchmen and twenty Swiss. They were supplied with provisions to last for the balance of the year, and with merchandise to trade with the Indians. Bienville drew the plan of the fortifications which he wished to be made, and instructed Berthel to have them erected as soon as possible on the spot he had designated.

On his return to New Orleans, Bienville wrote to the minister of the colonial department: "Your excellency will have seen by the accounts of this laborious campaign, which I have transmitted to the government, that in its conception and execution, and in the closing retreat, I made the best use I could of the means I had at my disposal, and you will also have remarked that, after having suffered in my preparations from delays which I could not anticipate, much less could I foresee the cowardice of the troops put under my orders. It is true that, considering the pitiful recruits of blackguards which are sent here, one ought never to entertain the flattering hope of making soldiers of them. What is worse, is the obligation under which I am, with such troops, to hazard the reputation of the nation, and to expose our officers to the necessity of meeting death or dishonor. The recruits recently arrived by the Gironde are still inferior to the preceding ones. There are but one or two men among them whose size is above five feet; as to the rest, they are under four feet ten inches. With regard to their moral character, it is sufficient to state that, out of fifty-two who have lately been sent here, more than one half have already been whipped for larceny. In a word, these useless beings are not worth the food bestowed upon them: they are burdens to the colony, and from them no efficient military service is to be expected."

It was only at New Orleans that Bienville learned that D'Artaguettes had arrived before him at the Chickasaw villages, and had met with a signal defeat and a tragical death. In conformity with the instructions he had received, D'Artaguettes had displayed considerable activity, and had reached, on the 4th of March, a place then called *Ecores à Prudhomme*, on the Mississippi, with thirty soldiers, one hundred volunteers, and almost all the Indians of the Kaskaskia village. There he was joined by De Vincennes with forty Iroquois, and all the Indians of the Wabash tribe. De Montcherval, with the Cahokias and the Mitchigamias, was daily expected. De Grandpré, who commanded at the Arkansas, had dispatched twenty-eight warriors of that tribe to ascertain whether D'Artaguettes was at the *Ecores à Prudhomme*, and to come back to him with that information. These Indians, when they reached the spot, finding that D'Artaguettes was moving away, followed him, and disregarded the instructions of Grandpré, who in vain waited for their return. D'Artaguettes proceeded by short stages, in order to give time to Montcherval and Grandpré to join him. When he arrived on the territory of the Chickasaws, he sent scouts to discover tidings of Bienville's army. These scouts soon returned, and reported that in the neighborhood of the Chickasaw villages, there were no vestiges of the French forces.

On the day following the return of these spies, a courier brought to D'Artaguettes a letter, in which he was informed that unexpected delays and obstacles in the preparations to be made, would prevent Bienville from being at the Chickasaws before the end of April, which would be the soonest, wherefore he was requested to take his measures accordingly. On the reception of this letter, D'Artaguettes convened a council of war,

composed of officers and of Indian chiefs. The Indians were for an immediate attack, representing that they had but few provisions, and therefore would be obliged to abandon the French in a short time; that their spies had reported that, at the extremity of the prairie where the Chickasaw villages were situated, there was an isolated one, (probably the village of the Natchez refugees) which had no more than thirty cabins, of which, no doubt, easy possession could be taken, and that the provisions they would find there would enable the whole army to wait comfortably for the arrival of Bienville, under the protection of fortifications which would soon be erected. Almost all of the French officers were of the same opinion, and the attack was resolved upon. At that moment, the allied forces were composed of one hundred and thirty Frenchmen and of three hundred and sixty-six Indians.

Having taken the determination to attack, the French marched on briskly, and came, without being discovered, as they thought, within the distance of a mile from the isolated village, on Palm Sunday. Leaving all his baggage to the keeping of thirty men commanded by Frontigny, D'Artaguettes marched on the village, which he attacked with great vigor. But hardly had the engagement begun, when four or five hundred Indians, who were headed by about thirty Englishmen, and who had kept themselves concealed behind a neighboring hill, fell upon the assailants with such impetuosity, and so unexpectedly, that the Miamis and the Illinois took to flight. Thirty-eight Iroquois, and the twenty-eight Arkansas sent by Grandpré, were the only Indians that stood by the French, who fought with desperate valor against the overwhelming odds they had to contend with. Lieutenant St. Ange was the first to fall, then the Ensigns De Coulanges, De la Gravière, and



De Courtigny, with six of the militia officers. Still the French, hemmed in on every side, did not give way an inch. But soon, Captain Des Essarts, Lieutenant Langlois, and Ensign Levieux, were shot down. Few officers remained on their legs, and the French, having lost forty-five men out of one hundred that they were, thought that it was high time to operate a retreat toward their baggage, where they expected to be supported by the detachment of thirty men they had left there. But they were pursued with such obstinate fury by the Chickasaws, that, at last, they were completely routed in spite of the courage and discipline which they had displayed. D'Artaguet, who had performed prodigies of valor, had fallen covered with wounds, and was taken prisoner, with Father Sénac, a Jesuit, Du Tisé, an officer of regulars, Lalande, a militia captain, and five or six soldiers and militia privates, making nineteen in all. The Chickasaws gave up the pursuit of the fugitives only after having killed fifty of them, and wounded many others. Not one man would have escaped, if a violent storm had not arisen, and checked the pursuers. The Chickasaws took possession of all the provisions and baggage of the French, with four hundred and fifty pounds of powder, twelve thousand bullets, and eleven horses. Their victory was as complete as possible, and the ammunition which fell into their hands was of great use to them, in helping them to resist the subsequent attack of Bienville.

D'Artaguet, Father Sénac, and fifteen others were burned alive, according to the usage of the Indians in festivals for victories obtained, and the remaining two captains were set aside, to be exchanged for a Chickasaw warrior who was in the hands of the French. This exchange effectually took place some time after.

The fugitives, on the second day of their flight, met



Montcherval, who was following D'Artaguettes with one hundred and sixty Indians, and fourteen Frenchmen. Montcherval gathered together the broken remnants of D'Artaguettes's army, and fell back, after having dispatched a courier to Grandpré. The courier met this officer on Margot River, with all the warriors of the Arkansas tribe. He was waiting for the return of the emissary he had sent to bring him back tidings of D'Artaguettes. On hearing of the defeat of the French, he returned to the settlement where he commanded.

The melancholy fate of D'Artaguettes and his companions produced on the colony almost as painful an impression as the Natchez massacre; and the bad success of Bienville's expedition was another cause of humiliation, which contributed to increase the gloom hanging over the country. De Beauchamp, who, it will be recollected, had been sent by Bienville to support Noyan when attacking the village of Ackia, and to facilitate his retreat, writing on this expedition, says:—  
“To make an end of the Chickasaw war, it is necessary to have a detachment of workmen, of miners and bombardiers, with the implements and instruments necessary to ferret out those savages, who burrow like badgers in their cabins, which are very much like ovens. If fire is set to them, the straw with which they are thatched will be consumed, but the cabin itself, the roof and lateral walls of which are made of mud one foot thick, will not burn. Besides, these cabins which are fortified, are so situated that they defend one another. It is not enough to take three or four of them: all must be taken, or there is no security. The ground being of a nature easy to be worked, miners are necessary to drive those savages out of their cabins; otherwise we should be exposed to lose, in attacking them, a considerable number of men.”

The failure of this expedition seems to have been due to a want of concert and foresight. It is probable that if the forces commanded by Bienville, D'Artaguet, Montcherval, and Grandpré, had arrived at the same time, and attacked from different points, the result would have been favorable to the French. As it was, this campaign proved disastrous in the extreme. D'Artaguet's forces had been completely crushed, and Bienville had lost over one hundred and twenty men. The expenses also had been very great, and had turned out to be entirely fruitless. These losses were so many deductions to be made from the scanty resources of the colony.

Lieutenant John Philip Goujon de Grondel, who had been so severely wounded at the attack on the village of Ackia, was three years without being able to resume active service. He was born at Severne, in the French province of Alsatia, on the 27th of November, 1714, and was the son of Lieutenant-colonel Grondel, who served in the Swiss regiment called the Karrer regiment, from the name of its colonel, the Chevalier de Karrer. Grondel the father, and Karrer, were bound by the ties of the most intimate friendship; and Grondel, when his son had hardly attained the age of five years and a half, availing himself of the privilege granted to the sons of gentlemen engaged in the king's service, had him registered as Cadet\* on the roll of the regiment of his friend Karrer. In November, 1731, young Grondel embarked for Louisiana with the Karrer regiment, in which he had become an officer, and arrived at last at New Orleans, after a laborious and tempestuous voyage of nearly four months. He was stationed for two years at Pointe Coupée, where he

\* A Cadet is a person of gentle blood who serves as a volunteer, in expectation of a promised commission.

distinguished himself in several skirmishes against the Indians. In 1734, he was ordered to Mobile, where he made himself conspicuous by his duels, his gayety, the sociability of his manners, his gallantries, and his marauding excursions against the Indians, in which he displayed great daring. In 1736, Bienville was preparing for his expedition against the Chickasaws, and Grondel was at the Tombecbee depot, when it was discovered that a sergeant, by the name of Montfort, had seduced the small garrison of that settlement, and had prevailed upon them to rise upon their officers. It was Grondel who, by his rapidity of action, disconcerted the plan of the rebels, and who arrested Montfort with his own hands. It is already known how bravely he behaved at the siege of the Chickasaw villages. The minister of the colonial department, on being informed of his conduct in that engagement, in which he was so dangerously wounded, sent him a gratuity of six hundred livres, with a promise of the cross of St. Louis.

In 1740, Grondel was the hero of an anecdote which is characteristic of the man who is the subject of this biographical sketch, and of the manners of the time. It was night, one of those glorious nights which are so peculiar to the southern latitude of Louisiana; the sky seemed an ocean of soft liquid light, through which the full moon was serenely floating, when several officers, kept out of their beds by the beauty and purity of the atmosphere, were promenading on the bank of the Mississippi, in front of the public square of the city of New Orleans. They had exhausted all subjects of conversation, and in spite of the buoyancy of their spirits, had become intolerably dull. One of them exclaimed, "What a pity we have no women at hand! We would dance. In the devil's name, what shall we do to amuse ourselves in such fine weather as this?" "In God's

name," replied Grondel, "how can you be at a loss? Let us fight. It is the best way to kill time." No sooner said than done. At it they went, each one paired with another, and passes after passes were exchanged in the most jocose and friendly manner imaginable, until one of them received a slight thrust from Grondel, which put an end to this amicable entertainment.

In 1741, a more serious turn of mind seemed to have come upon Grondel, and he married the daughter of Captain Du Tisé, one of the most esteemed and efficient officers in Louisiana, whose son had perished in the ill-fated D'Artaguettes expedition. From that time until 1750, when he became a captain of the Swiss grenadiers, he was employed in several military expeditions and diplomatic negotiations with the Indians, in which he acquitted himself with great credit to himself and to the satisfaction of his chiefs. In 1753, he was rewarded for his services by the decoration of the cross of St Louis, which had long been promised to him. Shortly after, happening to be at Dauphine Island when a Spanish vessel was wrecked and went to pieces on that coast, Grondel flung himself into the sea, and being an expert swimmer, saved several of the victims of the storm who were struggling against death. His heroic example was followed with equal success by others, who would have felt ashamed of their inaction. In 1758, Grondel returned to New Orleans from Mobile, and having been enriched by an heritage which befell his wife, became a large planter and the lord of one hundred and fifty negroes. But in 1759, he became embroiled in a quarrel with Governor Kerlerec, who accused him of insubordination and of several other offenses, for which he was thrown into prison, where he remained three years. In the month of Au-

gust, 1762, he was put by the governor on board of a vessel, in company with the Intendant Rochemore and several other officers, whom the governor charged with being engaged in a scheme of insurrection, and who were sent to France to be finally tried. In the Gulf of Mexico, after having run the risk of being wrecked, they were chased for a while by an English frigate, and escaped with difficulty by the chance favor of a dark night. The next day, at the entrance of the Bahama channel, they met an English privateer, who immediately ran upon them. The French vessel tried in vain to avoid her antagonist, than which she was considerably weaker. The French officers having met in council to deliberate on the propriety of surrendering without an ineffectual struggle, Grondel strenuously opposed any proposition of the kind, and affirmed that he had the presentiment of victory. His ardor was communicative, and his companions unanimously resolved to fight. Grondel having taken the command of the quarter-deck, the engagement soon began, and the English ship became so crippled that she was obliged to drop away and to shrink from the contest. A few days after, Grondel who, by tacit consent, had taken the military command of the French vessel, attacked a large English merchantman, and after a short engagement, in which he disabled several of the crew of his enemy, took possession of the English vessel. He dismissed her after having forced her captain to give to the French all the provisions of which they stood in need, and a draft of forty thousand crowns, which was paid on presentation.

The danger of being taken by the masters of the sea, was not the only one the French had to run. During a voyage of ninety-four days, they were constantly beaten by storms, until at last they were driven into

the port of La Coruña in Spain, on the 1st of November, 1762. After having rested three weeks in that city, Grondel departed with seven or eight of his companions, to go by land to Bordeaux. Rochemore, the intendant, with the rest of the passengers, re-embarked in their ship, which had been repaired. Grondel and his followers were all mounted on mules, and slowly pursued their way to the French frontiers. As it was very cold, he was wrapped up in a sort of Canadian morning gown made of very fine wool, and which, having a hood, resembled the gown of a Capuchin. He had appended to it his cross of St. Louis, and as he and his suite had a very respectable appearance, he was taken for a bishop by the peasants, who devoutly kneeled and crossed themselves as he passed. On these occasions, the faithful who courted Grondel's benediction, were blessed by him with a sanctimonious gravity which drew from his companions peals of laughter as soon as they were out of sight of the Spaniards. This was related by them as one of the most amusing incidents of their journey, and was in harmony with the levity of the time. After twenty-four days of painful traveling in an inclement season, Grondel arrived at Bayonne in France, where the Marquis d'Amon, who commanded in that city, and who was a friend of his colonel, received him with warm demonstrations of satisfaction and respect, and gave a public festival in his honor. At Bordeaux, the celebrated Duke of Richelieu, who was governor-general of the province of Guienne, treated him with the most gracious affability, and Grondel, although only a captain, was informed that a seat would be daily reserved for him at the marshal's table. From Bordeaux he went to visit at Rochefort the staff officers of his regiment, which had been recalled to France, and their joy at

seeing him showed what a hold he had on their hearts.

On the 17th of January, 1763, Grondel arrived in Paris; the next day he went and presented his respects to the Count of Hallwill, his late colonel, recently promoted to the rank of general, and to whom he complained of the persecution of which he was the object from the governor of Louisiana. General Hallwill took him under his protection, and carried him to Versailles, where he presented him to the minister, the Duke of Choiseul, who promised him promotion, if, on his trial, he was found innocent of the charges preferred against him. Kerlerec, the governor of Louisiana, had also been summoned to France, to make good the very grave accusations he had brought against the intendant Rochemore and so many officers. Kerlerec was a kinsman of Marshal D'Estrées, and on his arrival in France, making use of the influence of this nobleman at court, obtained an order of arrest (*lettre de cachet*) against Grondel, who, on the 9th of April, 1765, was carried to the Bastille, and whose papers were seized at his domicile, and put under seal. On the tenth day of his incarceration, he was interrogated by M. de Sartines, the minister of police, on whom he produced so favorable an impression, that a few days after he was set at liberty. He immediately left Paris in company with the Duke of Aiguillon, a friend of his father, to visit at Port Louis that gentleman, who was then one hundred years old, and who reached the age of one hundred and seven.

After having remained eighteen days under the parental roof, Grondel returned to Paris to sue for justice in his conflict with the Governor of Louisiana. On the 11th of August, 1769, after long delays, a judgment was rendered in his favor, and soon after he was ap-



pointed lieutenant-colonel, with a gratuity of two thousand five hundred livres, and an annual pension of eighteen hundred livres. These favors were rendered more valuable by being accompanied with a letter from the minister of marine, Duke of Praslin, in which the duke informed Grondel that all these rewards had been granted as testimonials of the high sense which the king had of his services. In the mean time, Louisiana having been ceded to Spain, Grondel gave up all thoughts of returning to that colony, and was appointed, on the 30th of December, 1772, to the command of the city of Lorient. According to his instructions, Grondel's wife sold all his property in Louisiana, and joined him in 1776, with all his family, except two daughters, who had married in the colony. In 1788, Grondel had risen to the grade of brigadier-general, which was bestowed on him without any solicitations on his part. The great revolution which was to shatter to pieces the throne of Louis the XVIth, was moving forward with fearful rapidity, and General Grondel who, owing to his advanced age, ceased to be on active service, retired to Nemours to end his days in such peace as was compatible with the storm which shook the very foundations of the state.

In 1792, General Grondel was denounced as an aristocrat and thrown into prison, but after an incarceration of eight days, he was restored to his family and friends. Shortly after, on the 29th of April, he was unanimously elected by the inhabitants of Nemours commanding-general of the national guards of that city, and he discharged the duties of this elevated position until the 1st of September, 1793. While commander of the national guards of Nemours, two corps of troops that were passing through having come to blows, General Grondel had the merit of quelling the riot by



throwing himself among the combatants, whom he awed into submission by his firmness and his venerable aspect; and the municipal authorities of Nemours voted him thanks for his noble conduct. In 1796, overwhelmed with grief at the horrors which had swept over France, he left Nemours, and retired to Salins, near Montereau. He was one of those who were most enthusiastic in favor of Bonaparte, when the future despot struck, on the 18th *Brumaire*, his celebrated blow against the legislative assemblies of France. On this occasion, Baudry de Lozieres relates that Grondel rapturously exclaimed: "I have lived long enough; France is saved and her wounds are closed: be it forever recorded, to the eternal glory of the God who has come down from heaven to confer upon us so many benefits! This great restorer is above the human species; for it does not belong to man to execute so many gigantic and immortal things, and to do so in such a short space of time."

So intense was Grondel's admiration for Bonaparte, that, on his being presented to the First Consul, the octogenarian veteran actually sobbed and shed tears on the hand of the youthful general who had become the master of France. The officer who, in 1732, had been fighting in Louisiana to secure that important colony to his country, can not but have felt deeply grateful, in 1802, to the hero who had wrested that rich possession from Spain, and reannexed it to the domains of France. But General Grondel's joy was not of long duration, and he lived to see Louisiana escape from the grasp of France to fall into the motherly lap of the United States of America.

## SEVENTH LECTURE.

STATE OF AGRICULTURE IN 1736—EXEMPTION FROM DUTIES ON CERTAIN ARTICLES OF IMPORTATION AND EXPORTATION—WAR BETWEEN THE CHOCTAWS AND CHICKASAWS—SINGULAR JUDICIAL PROCEEDING IN 1738—BIENVILLE'S DISPATCH ON THE SAND-BARS AT THE MOUTH OF THE MISSISSIPPI—DE NOAILLES IS SENT TO LOUISIANA TO COMMAND AN EXPEDITION AGAINST THE CHICKASAWS—BIENVILLE'S JEALOUSY—INTRIGUES OF THE INDIAN, RED SHOE—GENERAL RENDEZVOUS OF THE FRENCH AT THE MOUTH OF RIVER MARGOT—FAILURE OF THAT EXPEDITION—ITS PROBABLE CAUSES—BIENVILLE'S APOLOGY—EFFECTS OF A HURRICANE—SITUATION OF THE COLONY IN 1741—HEROISM OF A FRENCH GIRL IN A BATTLE AGAINST THE INDIANS—BIENVILLE INCURS THE DISPLEASURE OF HIS GOVERNMENT—HE DEMANDS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COLLEGE—THAT DEMAND IS REFUSED—BIENVILLE IS RECALLED TO FRANCE—HE DEPARTS NEVER TO RETURN—HE IS SUCCEEDED BY THE MARQUIS OF VAUDREUIL—OTHER FACTS AND EVENTS FROM 1736 TO 1743.

THE bad success of Bienville's campaign against the Chickasaws had, to some degree, checked the progress of the colony, and contributed to increase the disaffection of the inhabitants, who were already very little pleased with their colonial home, and who became still more dispirited by the prospect of protracted warfare with implacable savages. To this feeling of insecurity must be added the stagnation of commerce, and the precarious condition of agriculture, of which Bienville said: "The planters are disgusted with the cultivation of tobacco on account of the uncertainty of the crop, which is alternately affected either by the incessant rains, or by the long droughts so peculiar to this country. We may produce from thirty to thirty-five thousand pounds of indigo, if there be no accident in the way. The inhabitants are turning their attention to this branch of industry. As to silk, very little is made, through ignorance. With regard to cotton, the production is very

limited, on account of the difficulty of separating it from its seeds, or rather because the cultivation of indigo is more profitable. As to flax and hemp, hardly any is made. With regard to tar and pitch, the colony produces about six or seven thousand barrels, but it wants an outlet." Such was the state of agriculture in Louisiana in 1736.

On the 4th of February, 1737, the French government issued an ordinance which was to take effect on the 1st of July of that year. The object of it was to exempt from certain duties, during ten years, the productions of Louisiana which should be carried to Martinique, Guadaloupe, Trinity, Dominique, Barbade, St. Lucie, St. Vincent, Grenade, and the other islands of that archipelago, and the productions of these islands when transported directly to Louisiana. This was another measure of sound policy, and it is to be regretted that the whole administration of the colony was not founded on a system equally as praiseworthy.

During the whole of the year 1737, war was kept up, at the instigation of the French, between the Choctaws and the Chickasaws, without producing any result of importance. It consisted of marauding excursions, in which, however, the Choctaws, by their depredations, succeeded in inflicting some partial injuries on the Chickasaws, who were too well provided with means of defense not to set at defiance all the rude and incomplete engines of attack which could be brought to bear against them. In a dispatch of the 28th of February, Bienville had said: "Fortified as they are, with the help and through the instructions of the English, the Chickasaws can not be destroyed, except bombards of a strong caliber and miners are employed against them. It is necessary that we be so provided. The English have sent more than two hun-

dred men to the Chickasaws, to whom they afford every kind of assistance."

Nothing occurred during that year worth being recorded, except it be the phenomenon of the fall at New Orleans, on Palm Sunday, of hailstones as large as the eggs of a common hen, and the foundation of an hospital by a sailor, named Jean Louis, who, in the service of the India Company, had acquired a small capital of ten thousand livres, which, at his death, he consecrated to the relief of suffering humanity. At one of the extremities of the city, a house belonging to one Mme. Kolly was purchased for twelve hundred livres; the repairs went up to two thousand five hundred livres. One part of the balance of the sum bequeathed was employed in procuring the necessary apparatus and furniture, and the other part was kept in reserve. In 1849, the Charity Hospital of New Orleans, which is the principal institution of the kind in that city, accommodates in its spacious halls more than one thousand patients, at the annual expense of fifty thousand dollars. What contrasts will spring up from the lapse of a century!

As another exemplification of such contrasts, it may not be indifferent to record that, in 1738, the annals of Louisiana are marked by a singular judicial trial founded on laws, customs, feelings, and ideas which are so foreign to those of our own time, that there seems to be between them a wider chasm of ages than there really is. Thus, an individual named Labarre, having committed suicide, a curator was appointed to the corpse, which was indicted, tried, convicted, and sentenced to be deprived of Christian burial, and to lie rotting and bleaching on the face of the earth among the offals, bones, and refuse of the butcher's stall.

The French government had always felt considerable difficulty in preventing desertion in the troops sent to

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Louisiana. In a dispatch of the 18th of March, 1738, Bienville said: "Many of the Swiss desert to Pensacola, where they are protected openly by the monks and secretly by the governor. But as the Spaniards are in want of provisions, I have recommended to Diron d'Artaguet, at Mobile, not to supply them with any until they consent to deliver up our deserters."

In a communication of the 12th of April following, he returned to the same subject: "Three other Swiss," he wrote, "have again deserted to Pensacola, which is in a state of extreme famine. The governor of that place sent to me for some provisions. I refused them on account of the protection he grants to our deserters. Whereupon he sent them back to me. Every day, there come here Spaniards whom hunger drives away from Pensacola. We have already among us more than thirty of them, whose pale and squalid faces are frightful to look at, and testify to the sufferings of these wretches. Such misery is without a parallel."

These dispatches describe a state of things which is almost inexplicable. On one side, we see the Spaniards running away from Pensacola to New Orleans, to escape from starvation, and on the other, the Swiss and French soldiers deserting from the halls of abundance in New Orleans and Mobile, to throw themselves into the arms of famine in Pensacola. The only natural conclusion that one can come to on this subject is, that the French soldiers, blackguards as they are represented to be by Bienville, were disposed to run any risk rather than remain in Louisiana.

Among the official communications of that year to the French government, there is a joint one from Bienville and Salmon, which bears on a subject of much interest to this day. It relates to the sand-bars which obstruct the several mouths of the Mississippi. "There are daily

changes," they said, "at the mouth of the river and the Balize bar. It has been remarked that, when the winter is short and the north wind has not prevailed much, these changes become more perceptible and the water is not so deep. This may also proceed from the existence of two other passes, through which water runs with more rapidity than in the one which is called the Balize.\*

"Harbor-master Livaudais (capitaine de port) used to find, ten years ago, about sixteen feet water on the Balize bar, but it has since become greatly obstructed. Lately, when piloting the Oroo, Livaudais did not find more than eleven feet and a half on the bar. On account of this diminution of the water, this vessel made her way up with considerable difficulty, the more so, that she draws more water than those ships which preceded her. This shallowness of the water over the bar has frequently been the cause of damages and expenses."

"To obviate this inconvenience, the India Company some twelve years since, had caused to be constructed iron harrows, (horses) which were dragged over the bar, to remove the sand and mud. But this expedient had its disadvantages: it removed the soft mud, and left the sand, which, forming a solid and compact body, would, in time, not only have interfered with the passage of ships, but have prevented it altogether. This caused the harrows to be abandoned. As the ships of the company were large, and could not pass without being lightened, a small vessel (flute) was left stationed on the Balize bar, to receive part of the cargoes, and the spot where this vessel happened to be anchored, deepened gradually to twenty-five feet."

\* The Balize is known now under the name of the South-East Pass, and is not used at all, as there is hardly six feet water on the bar

“From this fact the inference has been drawn, that, to deepen entirely the Balize, it would be proper to have a vessel drawing eighteen feet, in the hold of which brick wells should be constructed. By alternately pumping water into and out of these wells, the vessel would rise or sink at will:—and by running her up and down over the bar, it is evident that she would cut a channel through. It is true this would be expensive, but the utility of the measure would be incalculable.”

“Livaudais, who is a seaman of thirty years’ standing, has long been of great service to the colony, in the piloting of vessels over the bar, and by his prudence, he has frequently preserved them from accidents. After having served some years on the privateers of St. Malo, he came to the colony in the employment of the India Company. He has deserved well of the government, and it would be proper that a commission of ensign be granted to him.”

The Balize pass, which, in 1728, had sixteen feet water, in 1738, fourteen feet and a half, and which Bienville represents as filling up rapidly, is known in our days as the South-East pass, and having no more than six feet water, has long been abandoned. The necessity of deepening the mouths of the Mississippi was actually felt by the French government, when the colony was in its infancy, and it is really astonishing, that a work of so national an importance, which can be executed at a cost comparatively insignificant, when taken in connection with the results to be obtained, should not as yet have been accomplished by the government of the United States, with the ample pecuniary and scientific means which it possesses.

But in those remote days, although such an improvement, by the force of its practicability and of its utility, obtruded itself upon the attention of the French gov-

ernment, yet its execution would have far exceeded the expenses which that government was willing and able to bestow upon a colony, of which the existence was so precarious. It was feared, not without reason, that England, favored by the contiguity of her American provinces, would, ere long, make a successful attack upon Louisiana. The fact is, that the English were multiplying their intrigues among the Indian nations, to make them rise upon the French, and had succeeded to a considerable extent. The Illinois, and many other western and northern nations, whose friendship had so far been secured by the French, had become cold and disaffected, if not entirely alienated; and among the Choctaws, Red Shoe, with a considerable party, had again allied himself to the English. With such dangers staring him in the face, Bienville had been more pressing than ever in soliciting additional forces, and was at last successful. The Minister of Marine wrote to him:—"His majesty sends to M. de Bienville, artillery, arms, ammunition, provisions, merchandise, and seven hundred men, the recruits included. His majesty also sends bombardiers, cannoniers, and miners, with M. de Noailles d'Aime, who has long served as lieutenant of a ship of the line, and who is to command the Swiss and the detached marine troops. It is his majesty's wish, that, during the expedition, M. de Noailles should have the command, not only of these troops, but also of the colonial troops and militia which are under the orders of M. de Bienville, to whom his majesty recommends, with regard to the direction and employment of his troops, to act in concert with M. de Noailles, who has the necessary talents and experience to command."

"A second expedition is authorized, if it be thought



of absolute utility to the colony. However, it must not be undertaken without real necessity."

There certainly was no sound policy in this ministerial communication, for it must have been easy to anticipate the feelings which it was calculated to awaken in Bienville's heart. It was telling him in plain terms, that he had not *the necessary talent and experience to command*, and that another who possessed them, was sent to supply his deficiencies. It is clear that the success of the intended expedition, under another chief, would have rendered more glaring Bienville's failure in his past operations against the Chickasaws. He had tasted the bitterness of defeat, and when, after unremitting exertions and importunities, he had obtained the means he wished for, to wipe off the stain which adverse fortune had left on his military reputation, he was not to profit by the boon. In the same field, where he had reaped nothing but disappointment and shame, another was to come and gather a rich harvest of glory. He, Bienville, so at least thought the minister, had not *the necessary talent and experience to command*, and no chance was left him, to prove that the impression was wrong. On the contrary, the success of a rival would be a confirmation of the ministerial judgment. No doubt that Bienville felt, to the very core of his soul, the indignity of his new position, and when it is recollected, that he was the founder of the colony, that he had been forty years connected with it, that he had in it numerous relations, kinsmen, friends, and adherents, who looked up to him with clannish pride, who resented his injuries as their own, and who took the liveliest interest in his reputation and affairs, it does not require a deep insight into human nature, to foresee that the projected expedition was doomed to defeat. It is but seldom that half-way measures do not prove abortive,

and do not fall far wide of the mark they were intended for. Bienville had, or had not the qualifications to be trusted with command in war. If he had them, it was cruel and unjust, after the mortifications he had experienced in his struggles against the Chickasaws, through a deficiency of adequate means, as he alledged, not to afford him the opportunity of retrieving his past reverses, and to put all the required implements which he had demanded at the disposal of another. It is evident that Bienville, if he was not qualified to act as the leader of an army, ought to have been superseded at once. But to leave him in his post, with the mocking appearance of command and power, to trample on his pride, his sense of dignity, and his self-love, by putting him under a sort of tutor, was a dangerous experiment to be made. It was gratuitously and imprudently tempting the demon that lurks within the deep and fathomless caves of the human heart. Future events have demonstrated that the French government had not pursued the course of wisdom on that occasion.

The greater part of the year 1739 was devoted to making preparations for that campaign, by which the destruction of the Chickasaws was to be accomplished. In the month of March, Bienville sent his nephew, the Chevalier de Noyan, among the Choctaws, to conciliate them and obtain their support. Noyan succeeded in his mission, and out of the forty-two villages inhabited by the nation of the Choctaws, he gained thirty-two. The remaining ten, who were under the influence of Red Shoe, declared themselves in favor of the English. In some of the thirty-two villages which had pronounced themselves in favor of the French, English traders were plundered, wounded, and put to flight; and parties of warriors were formed, who departed to war against the

Chickasaws. They brought back their usual trophies, which consisted of scalps.

Proud of having prevented the ten villages from joining in the alliance which the majority of them had formed with the French, Red Shoe, at the head of ninety-eight warriors, had gone to the English settlements in Georgia, under the hope of being handsomely rewarded. It appears that he was disappointed, for on his return, he sided with the French, who, no doubt, offered him better terms, and on the 18th of August he plundered three English warehouses, and departed on a war expedition against the Chickasaws. Thus, the whole Choctaw nation had become favorable to the French, and Bienville found himself placed under the most auspicious circumstances to execute his plans of attack against the Chickasaws. He had given up the idea of following the old route through the lakes and up the Tombecbee, although it was the shortest and the easiest, and he took the resolution to ascend the Mississippi up to that part of its bank which was the nearest to the Chickasaw villages. From that spot to the Indian villages, the distance was about one hundred and twenty miles. His reason for taking this other and longer route, was his thinking that it afforded him facilities to procure a more considerable quantity of provisions, and to transport his artillery with less trouble. Since 1737, the engineer Deverges, in compliance with Bienville's instructions, had studied the ground and reported that it offered an easy access to the Indian villages. Acting under this impression, Bienville had fixed for the general rendezvous of his combined forces, the mouth of the river Margot, not far from the present city of Memphis.

Since the arrival of Noailles with seven hundred men, Bienville was abundantly supplied with troops, provis-

ions, ammunition, bombards, and guns, and every thing looked fair at the opening of the campaign. In the month of August, De Noyan, who commanded the vanguard, reached the general rendezvous at the mouth of the river Margot. A short time after, De la Buissonniere, who had succeeded the unfortunate D'Artaguet in the command of the Illinois district, arrived with a detachment of the garrison of Fort Chartres, with a body of the Illinois militia, and about two hundred Indians. A week had hardly elapsed, when Céleron and St. Laurent made their appearance. These intrepid officers were from the far distant Canadian provinces, and had come with a company of Quebec and Montreal cadets, and a considerable number of the northern Indians. This company of cadets was composed of select youths, all of gentle birth, and the sons of officers. After a short apprenticeship, they were entitled to be, in their turn, commissioned as officers. While they were waiting for Bienville, the troops constructed a fort where they were encamped, and called it Fort Assumption, from the circumstance of its having been completed on the day when the Catholic church celebrates the feast of the Assumption.

The rest of the troops, under the command of Bienville, reached the general rendezvous only on the 12th of November. Inexplicable delays had, it seems, prevented the junction of all the forces of the expedition from taking place sooner. In the mean time, that part of the army which had been lingering on the banks of the river Margot since the month of August, had been afflicted with disease, and great mortality had ensued. When the whole army was reviewed on the 12th of November, it was found to be composed of about twelve hundred white men and two thousand four hundred Indians. Bienville had left New Orleans on the

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12th of September, and in one of his dispatches boasts of the rapidity with which he ascended the river, considering that he was only two months on the way.

When all the forces of the expedition were brought together, it was discovered that there was a good deal of false reckoning in the quantity of provisions they expected to have, and Bienville informed the French government that more than half of the cattle, horses, and provisions which had been gathered at Fort St. Francis in Arkansas, had been lost in crossing over the marshes and low countries they had to go through on the way to the place of rendezvous at the mouth of the river Margot. Only eighty oxen and thirty-five horses reached the French camp, but in such a condition that they were not fit for any thing. Two hundred and fifty horses, with one hundred head of cattle, which were expected from Natchitoches, had also perished.

The scarcity of provisions had increased the necessity of acting without loss of time. But Bienville did not think proper to take the road discovered since 1737 by the engineer Deverges, because he said it was made impracticable by the overflowing of small rivers. A man by the name of Saucier, who, in the communications of the time, is called a *drawer of plans* (or dessinateur), had also found a road, but it was rejected by Bienville. The engineer Deverges again went to work under the direction of Noyan, and after two months of exploration, discovered, in January, a practicable road on the high lands (*sur les hauteurs*). Unfortunately, this road came to light precisely at the moment when the provisions began to be exhausted. Even then, Bienville and Noailles appear to have remained in a state of hesitation until the month of February, 1740, when a council of war, composed of Bienville, Noailles, Bellagues,

Du Teillay, De Longueil, De Noyan, De Gauvrit, D'Hauterive, D'Aubigny, and Pepinet, decided that, considering all the untoward circumstances the French had to contend with, it was impossible to march to the Chickasaw villages, *without hazarding the reputation of the king's arms*,\* and orders were given to prepare for a retreat. This was the greatest armament which the country had yet seen, and all this bustle, show, and pomp of war had ended in smoke. The mountain had been delivered of a mouse; the French had gathered from the four quarters of the horizon merely to disperse.

What is remarkable is, that Céleron, either authorized by Bienville, or assuming the undertaking on his own responsibility, departed from Fort Assumption, on the 15th of March, after the bulk of the army had moved off down the Mississippi, and marched upon the Chickasaw villages, with his company of cadets, about one hundred Frenchmen and four or five hundred Indians. When Céleron appeared in sight of the villages with his small forces, the Chickasaws, either believing that it was only the head of the French army which was coming behind, or frightened at the vastness of the preparations which had been made against them, and at the unalterable determination which the French seemed to have taken to wage a war of extermination against their nation, presented themselves before the French officer, as suppliants for peace, which they solicited in the humblest terms. Céleron accepted their propositions, and sent some of their chiefs after Bienville, whom they overtook on his way to New Orleans. The French governor made with them a treaty, by which they promised to deliver up the Natchez they had in their possession, and to exterminate the rest of that unfortunate race. However, Bienville declared to them that the

\* Sans compromettre les armes du Roi.

treaty of peace did not include the Choctaws, who would continue to make war upon them, and to receive from the French the customary price for every Chickasaw scalp they would raise, until they, the Chickasaws, should grant to the Choctaws the satisfaction which these allies of the French demanded for certain injuries they pretended to have received. In consequence of this treaty, the Chickasaws delivered up to Céleron a few Natchez, whom he put into the hands of the French of Louisiana, and he returned to Canada with his forces, after having razed to the ground Fort Assumption, which had risen like a mushroom growth, and which was thus destined to have but an ephemeral duration.

Céleron is the only officer who gained any reputation in that expedition, which proved so disgraceful to the French, although heralded with so much pomp, and although replete with so ample means of success. Bienville himself felt that the result of that campaign would redound very little to his credit; and in a dispatch of the 10th of May, 1740, he gives for it but a very lame and impotent justification. It is evident that he felt embarrassed and ill at ease under the weight of the circumstances which militated against him. His pen labored for excuses, and it is apparent that they sprung up meager and thin from a barren field. Thus he wrote to the minister of the colonial department:—

“Much to my sorrow, I feel that your excellency will not be satisfied with the result of an enterprise which has cost so many expenses to the king; but, at the same time, I hope that you will be pleased to observe, that I had not failed to take every one of those necessary precautions, which ought to have rendered that campaign as glorious as possible for his majesty. . . . .

. . . . .



“ At all events, if we did not come out of it with all the success which we had a right to expect, the glory of the king’s arms has not been tarnished. All the Indian tribes were struck with the grandeur of our preparations, and have felt the superiority of our forces. They have stood eye-witnesses to the fear with which we impressed our enemies, and which induced them to sue for peace. I think that I can even assert that, considering the tranquillity which the colony now enjoys, our affairs are in a better position than if we had marched to the Chickasaws, from whose own confession we know that they were observing our movements, with the intention of abandoning their villages, as soon as they should have been made aware of our march upon them. . . . .

“ After all, those Chickasaws can not, when left to their own resources, be a cause of much uneasiness to the colony. We know from their own mouths that they hardly number three hundred able bodied men, and that their most famous warriors perished in their late wars.”

To have mustered, at an enormous expense, an army of three thousand six hundred men, well provided with artillery, bombards, and arms of every sort, and to have come within one hundred and twenty miles of the stronghold of the enemy, without striking a blow ; to have lost five hundred men by disease out of the twelve hundred white troops, and after the beginning of a retreat, to have patched up, as it were by accident, a sort of sham and hollow peace, for the observation of which there was no warranty beyond the pledged word of fickle savages, these were circumstances which gave the most positive denial to Bienville’s assertion, that, “ *if the French did not come out of that campaign with all the success which they had a right to expect, the glory of*



*the king's arms had not been tarnished."* Nor is it possible to agree with Bienville, when he says that the affairs of the colony were in a better condition than if he had marched up to the villages of the enemy, *because in that case the intention of the Indians was to abandon those villages.* But even admitting that supposition to be correct, would not the destruction of such well-fortified strongholds as they were represented to be, have been an immense advantage to the French? And if the conviction that the Indians would have retired before such overwhelming odds be a good reason for not continuing the expedition, it must have been an equally strong one for not undertaking it. Nor is it possible, again, to agree with him when he declares that the Indian nations were struck with the grandeur of his preparations, that they were made aware of the superiority of the French forces, and that they had witnessed *the fear which such a display struck into the bosoms of the Chickasaws*, who were forced to sue for peace. It seems, on the contrary, that the insignificance of the result obtained, when compared with the vast scale on which the expedition against the Chickasaws was conducted, must have been a practical demonstration, particularly in the eyes of the Choctaws, who numbered fifteen thousand warriors, of the utter incapacity of the French to cope with any of the powerful Indian tribes.

A large share, it is true, must be allowed for accidents in the affairs of this world, but those of which Bienville speaks in his dispatches, such as the overflow of rivers, and the loss of cattle and horses, were of a nature to have been foreseen to a certain degree. There certainly was a great want of concert of operations in the movements of the army. How came the head of it to arrive at the mouth of the river Margot in August, and to be obliged to wait until the 12th of November?

Then, from the 12th of November to the month of February, how came twelve hundred white men and two thousand four hundred Indians to remain in a state of torpor? Were the one hundred and twenty miles which separated the French camp from the Chickasaw villages so impracticable? Had not D'Artaguet found these villages of easy access, in 1736, through the same country? If the road discovered in 1737 by the engineer Deverges had become out of the question *on account of the overflowing of small rivers*, as stated by Bienville, what objection was there to Saucier's? And when, in January, a third road was found out on the *high lands*, which road was successfully taken by Céleron, on the 15th of March, how came the whole army to remain motionless through the whole of February? What a series of inexplicable delays from August, 1739, to March, 1740! Bienville had lately been very pressing in demanding additional forces, and had always represented the ferocious Chickasaws as so formidable, that their very existence was incompatible with the tranquillity of the colony. How came he so suddenly to change his tone, and to say, that *those Chickasaws were not, after all, a source of much uneasiness to the colony?* On a calm and dispassionate review of all the circumstances, it is hardly possible not to come to the conclusion, that there was something rotten at the bottom of that expedition.

The solution of the enigma must, I am afraid, be looked for in the impolitic measure taken by the French government to send Noailles to assume the command of the intended expedition against the Chickasaws, and to retain Bienville in a subordinate capacity under him. There were no doubt seeds of much mischief in these words of the French minister to Bienville: "His majesty sends M. de Noailles who has the necessary talents

and experience to command." These suppositions, founded on the knowledge of human nature, are fully confirmed by a report of the engineer Deverges, who says, that, although his determination is carefully to abstain from accusing any body, yet he must confess that the failure of the expedition was owing to jealousies, bickerings, and conflicts of power. This was, no doubt, putting the finger on the sore. How could it be otherwise, when the greater the resources granted to a preferred rival, the greater became Bienville's interest that these resources should crumble into dust in the hands of their possessor, in order to justify the sterility of the expedition which he, Bienville, had undertaken with such inferior means? Patriotism and private interest ought seldom to be put in opposite scales, or a hundred to one that patriotism will kick the beam.

It appears from a statement of the 15th of June, 1740, signed by Bienville and commissary Salmon, that from the first of January, 1737, to the 31st of May, 1740, the expenses of the Chickasaw war amounted to 1,088,383 livres, and that for the year 1740, the budget of the ordinary expenses of the colony was put down at 310,000 livres.

On the 11th of September, 1740, there was a dreadful hurricane, which produced very extensive disasters in the colony, of which Beauchamp, the commander of Mobile, gives a description in a dispatch of the 25th of February, 1741.

"This hurricane," says he, "was so violent, that, here, it blew down several houses, and among others, the edifice which M. Bizoton had constructed, not only as a store, but as a house of refuge for sailors. Unfortunately, it contained all the flour and other provisions destined for the subsistence of the garrison. I was

obliged to send the garrison a fishing along the coast for the barrels which had been blown into the water, and part of which was staved off. Without this barrel fishing, we should have run the risk of dying of hunger, as our resources were limited to six or eight barrels of flour, which were in the fort.

“The wind was so furious that, if it had continued for forty-eight hours, as all hurricanes generally do, we should have been inundated. Fortunately, it blew only during twelve hours, but with such force, that half of Dauphine Island was carried away, and more than three hundred head of cattle were drowned on the island. We have lost a greater number of them on this coast, and at Pascagoulas. This loss is severely felt by the poor population of this section of the country.

“The effect produced by the force of the wind is almost incredible. There was lying before the guard-house of Dauphine Island, a cannon of four pound caliber. The wind transported it eighteen feet from where it was. This fact is sworn to by all the inhabitants of the island.

“This hurricane, which lasted twelve hours, began in the night of the 11th of September, and ceased on that day at noon. But although its duration was not long, it caused much damage. . . .

. . . . To cap the climax of our misfortunes, there came another hurricane on the 18th of September, which destroyed the rest of our resources. This wind, which blew from N. N. E. and which was accompanied by heavy rains, caused an overflowing of all the rivers, by which were laid waste all the plantations of the Indians from Carolina to this place. The first hurricane was from E. S. E.:—luckily these hurricanes did not pass over New Orleans and the adjacent

country, where the crops have turned out to be pretty abundant. Otherwise, the whole colony would have been in a frightful state from the scarcity of provisions, and it would have been utterly impossible to make presents to the Choctaws, in whose debt, on this score, we have been for two years."

On the 7th of March, Loubois wrote to the French government a communication, which more than confirmed Beauchamp's description of the state of the colony. According to the statement of Loubois, Louisiana was reduced to the lowest degree of misery. Among the other effects which he relates as the result of the hurricane of the 11th, and that of the 18th, he says, that the battery at the Balize was so much damaged that, if attacked, it could be carried by four gun-boats. There was such a scarcity of every thing, that a cask of common wine was sold for 500 livres, of Spanish money, and 800 livres, in the currency of the colony, and the rest in proportion. As to flour, it could be commanded by no price, as there was none to be had. On the 18th of July, the same Loubois wrote: "There are many families reduced to such a state of destitution, that fathers, when they rise in the morning, do not know where they will get the food required by their children." Louisiana, now reposing so luxuriously in the lap of plenty, can hardly, when looking at her plump cheeks in the mirror presented to her by the year 1849, be persuaded to recognize herself in the picture drawn of her in the year 1741.

To increase the somber hue of the horizon which surrounded the colony, the Natchez and Chickasaws had recommenced their depredations, and the Pointe Coupée settlement had been the first to suffer from their excursions. These same Indians, to the number of one hundred and forty, attacked in the Wabash a party of

twenty-four French trappers and traders, among whom were a woman and a young girl. Unluckily, the inclemency of the weather had driven the French to take shelter on the banks of a small bayou, and the Indians, who had been following them for some time, took hold of hills which commanded the bayou, and on which they were protected by thick woods. From this vantage-ground, they poured their fire on the French. The battle lasted six hours, during which time the young girl displayed the greatest heroism. She repeatedly exposed her life, by coming out of her place of concealment, to cut the powder horns of those of her companions who dropped dead, and to distribute the much wanted ammunition among the surviving. At last, a bullet put an end to her existence, and the other female was also killed. Of the twenty-four trappers, or traders, sixteen perished. The remaining eight, seeing that they could no longer maintain their ground, made a desperate charge upon their foes, and forced their way through. Three of them were wounded, but they all escaped. Writing on these events, Loubois said, "I am mortified, for the sake of the tranquillity of this unhappy country, to see that I was not mistaken in the judgment which I had passed on our late treaty of peace with the Chickasaws."

Thus, it is seen, that the French officers knew how to reduce to its true value the nugatory peace which Bienville had contracted with the Chickasaws. With regard to the French, it was purely nominal; and the Choctaws, so far, had not obtained the slightest redress for those injuries of which they complained, and for which Bienville had demanded satisfaction of the Chickasaws. These two nations were therefore still in arms against each other, and had several encounters, in which the Choctaws had the advantage. On that occasion,

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Bienville informed his government, that he saw with pleasure that the Choctaws were growing more warlike, and that they were no longer afraid of meeting their old enemies in battle.

The establishments at the Balize having been almost destroyed by the hurricanes of the 11th and 18th of September, 1740, it became necessary to renew or restore them. The engineer Deverges estimated the probable cost at 454,974 livres, including only the most important part of the works. Bienville informed the French government, that he had contracted for what it was most urgent to have done, with Dubreuil, who was the only man in the colony sufficiently wealthy, to take charge of such an undertaking, and to whom it had been adjudicated for the sum of 297,382 livres 10 centimes.

On the 31st of October, the council of state, in France, prorogued to ten years the ordinance of the 30th of September, 1732, which exempted from duties the imports into, and the exports from Louisiana. It was a laudable perseverance in the right path.

The budget of the current expenses of Louisiana in 1741, amounted to 319,411 livres. The salary of the governor was 12,000 livres; his secretary, 1200 livres; the royal commissary, 8,000 livres.

The French government, according to Bienville's expectations, had learned with much displeasure the result of the last expedition against the Chickasaws, and the minister of the colonial department addressed Bienville on the subject with some severity. From that time, all the official communications which he received were harsh in their tone, and showed how much ground he had lost at court. In a dispatch of the 19th of January, 1742, the minister, after having expressed his discontent and disapprobation with regard to several acts



of Bienville's administration, says:—"Moreover, it has come to my knowledge, that you have permitted two families, established in the colony, to emigrate to St. Domingo, by the ship Triton, and not only have you not laid before me the reasons which may have determined you to grant this permission, but you have not even informed me of their departure. Yet, you must be aware that, independently of the prejudice caused to the colony by the desertion of its inhabitants, such an example can not but be a source of discouragement for those who remain in it. Hence, his majesty forbids you to allow any one to leave the colony, without orders sent to you on this subject. You will be pleased to act in conformity with this instruction. You will also communicate to me the reasons for which you allowed these two families to go to St. Domingo. The suggestion which you have made, that permission be granted to the inhabitants of Martinique to emigrate at will to Louisiana with their goods and negroes, deserves to be examined, and I will see what is to be done in the matter."

From the continuance of the tone in which he was addressed, Bienville saw that he could not weather the disfavor into which he had fallen, and begged to be recalled:—which application was readily acquiesced in.

In the mean time, the Choctaws were continuing to wage war against the Chickasaws with great spirit, activity, and success. The race of the Chickasaws, like that of the Natchez, was threatened with destruction. Their ancient power and renown were ebbing fast away. They had lately lost more than fifty warriors, one hundred and sixty horses, and a large number of their cattle. The few surviving Natchez who had taken refuge with the Chickasaws, finding they were an incumbrance to their generous protectors, who were so sorely pressed,



had retired among the Cherokees. So fierce, indeed, had become the struggle between the Choctaws and Chickasaws, that it promised a speedy termination,—the former, who were much more powerful, having sworn that they would drive away the latter from their old hereditary possessions. The Choctaw chief, Red Shoe, acquired great distinction in this war, and became the scourge and terror of the Chickasaws.

The preoccupations, vicissitudes, and dangers of war had much contributed to the neglect of agriculture in the colony. But a fragrant shrub, called the *Anemiche* by the Indians, had attracted the attention of the government. It is the wax-tree, or candle-berry (*myrica cerifera*), of which the wax is used for making candles. These candles were, at that time, in general use among the inhabitants of Louisiana. The French government thought that they could make of the wax an object of trade, and required information on the subject, which was given in very interesting reports made by Bienville, Salmon, the botanist Alexandre, and others. It resulted from the investigations at that time, that the cultivation of this shrub might be productive, and that, at an average, eight pounds of berries produced one pound of wax.

On the 26th of March, 1742, Bienville wrote to the minister with regard to his recall:—"If success had always corresponded with my application to the affairs of the government, and administration of this colony, and with my zeal for the service of the king, I should have rejoiced in consecrating the rest of my days to such objects; but through a sort of fatality which, for some time past, has obstinately thwarted my best concerted plans, I have frequently lost the fruit of my labors, and perhaps some ground in your excellency's confidence. Therefore have I come to the conclusion,

that it is no longer necessary for me to struggle against my adverse fortune. I hope that better luck may attend my successor. During the balance of my stay here, I will give all my attention to smooth the difficulties attached to the office which I shall deliver up to him, and it is to me a subject of self-gratulation that I shall transmit to him the government of the colony, when its affairs are in a better condition than they have ever been." It is impossible not to sympathize with the deep despondency and bitter feeling of disappointment expressed in this dispatch of Bienville, who felt, no doubt, that the ties which for more than forty years had connected him with Louisiana, the joint creation of his family and of himself, were forever to be severed. Who has not met, or will not meet the day when he stood, or will stand up in desolation like Bienville, with what energy he may summon up from his soul, amid the shivered fragments of hereditary affections, long-cherished hopes, and deeply-laid plans of fortune and happiness, which were the very household gods of his heart? Who? But why philosophize? It has become too trite and commonplace.

Although waiting for his successor, and governing the country only ad interim, Bienville was not the less on the lookout for every thing that could be turned to the profit or advantage of Louisiana. On the 15th of June, he wrote to the French government, jointly with Salmon:—"It is long since the inhabitants of Louisiana made representations on the necessity of their having a college for the education of their children. Convinced of the advantages of such an establishment, they invited the Jesuits to undertake its creation and management. But the reverend fathers refused, on the ground that they had no lodgings suited for the purpose, and had not the necessary materials to support such an institu-

tion. Yet it is essential that there be one, at least for the study of the classics, of geometry, geography, pilotage, &c. There, the youths of the colony would be taught the knowledge of religion, which is the basis of morality. It is but too evidently demonstrated to parents, how utterly worthless turn out to be those children, who are raised in idleness and luxury, and how ruinously expensive it is for those who send their children to France to be educated. It is even to be feared from this circumstance, that the Creoles, thus educated abroad, will imbibe a dislike to their native country, and will come back to it only to receive and to convert into cash what property may be left to them by their parents. Many persons in Vera Cruz would rejoice at having a college here, and would send to it their children."

This joint application of Bienville and Salmon for a college was set aside on the ground that the colony was *too unimportant* for such an establishment. Strange to say, Louisiana has ever since suffered, through more than a century, from the difficulty of educating her native population within her own limits; and to this day, we may regret with Bienville, that so large a number of Louisianians are yearly sent away to distant colleges, in countries from which they return, perhaps with a distaste for what awaits them under the paternal roof, and often with a much less keen sense of patriotism and of state pride. Nor is it astonishing if, after a long absence, their whole organization requires to be morally and bodily modified to suit the climate of our southern latitude and the atmosphere of our peculiar institutions, ideas, feelings, and manners. Fortunately, the legislature of the state is gradually preparing a remedy for this evil.

The year 1742 was drawing to a close, and the col-

ony would have enjoyed perfect tranquillity, if it had not been somewhat disturbed by the war of the Chickasaws and of the Choctaws. However, the Chickasaws had lately suffered so much from the incessant attacks of the Choctaws, that many of them were seeking for an asylum in Carolina, and it was hoped that Louisiana would soon be rid of that turbulent race. But some fears of an attack from a more powerful foe were excited by the circumstance of some Englishmen being found on the Mississippi, in the Illinois district, and of others being arrested about one hundred and twenty miles above Natchez. As it was supposed that Englishmen could not have come to Louisiana with good intentions, those who were made prisoners in the Illinois district were sentenced, some to three, and some to five years' imprisonment; and with regard to those who were caught near Natchez, in small bark canoes, and who were five in number, Bienville wrote that they were spies from Virginia. "They shall be tried," said he, "and I shall endeavor that they be sent to the mines of New Mexico."

The French were then on very good terms with the Spaniards, and Bienville informed the French government that the *Audiencia Real*, or supreme royal tribunal, which, at that time, governed ad interim, the provinces of Mexico, having received intelligence that the English, under Admiral Vernon, meditated an attack against Vera Cruz, had applied to him to obtain six eighteen pounders, and that, in concert with the commissary, Salmon, he had granted them the assistance demanded.

The current expenses of the colony for the year 1742, amounted to 322,629 livres.

The Marquis de Vaudreuil, the successor of Bienville, arrived at New Orleans, on the 10th of May, 1743, and

Bienville departed for France, never to return to the colony, although his life was prolonged twenty-five years. When he left Louisiana, he had reached the age of sixty-five, and he carried away with him the regrets, the esteem, and the affections of all the colonists, who called him the father of the country. With it, as an object of his creation, he was naturally identified, and he loved it with all the fervor of the parental heart. Hence did he, perhaps, think himself possessed of a prescriptive right to its administration, and it is not improbable that he looked with a jealous eye on all that interfered with this right. The fact is, that ill did he seem to brook any authority set over him; and who is he who will fling the first stone and say that, in Bienville's place, he is sure he could have felt and acted differently? Bienville deservedly exercised great influence in the country, which had been settled under his auspices and patronage, and which was full of Canadians like himself, of his numerous friends and dependents, kinsmen and family connections. When in opposition he must have been able to do much, either directly or indirectly. To the fear of this power which he possessed, must be ascribed his recall to France, and his detention there for ten years, when P rier was appointed governor in 1726. Hence, also, the removal from office, at that time, of all his friends, and of all the members of his family. At a later period, to him, or if he remained passive himself, to the ill-will of his creatures, whom he did not exert himself to check, must be attributed the failure of the expedition against the Chickasaws, under De Noailles, in 1739. At least, all appearances and a whole concourse of circumstances combine to impress this belief upon the mind of the historian. Bienville himself, feeling at a loss how to present his justification in a favorable light, and to rebut the presump-

tions and all the circumstantial evidence which rose in testimony against him, was obliged, as he did in his dispatch of the 26th of March, 1742, to have recourse to *fatality*, and to attribute his misfortunes to this stern and omnipotent cause. With the exception of this single blemish, his career is one of unsullied purity and of continual usefulness. A man of undoubted integrity, a strict observer of his word, punctilious as a knight-errant as to his honor and fair fame, devotedly attached to his country and to his king, true, heart and soul, to his friends, to his kinsmen and family connections, bland and courteous in his manners, humane and generous, possessing a highly gifted personal appearance, having all the distinction inherent to a man of refined and elegant tastes, he retained that air of grandeur so peculiar to the age of Louis XIVth, which had closed when he had already reached manhood, being over thirty years old when the grand monarch died. With all these qualifications, he might have been set up as a faithful representation of the gentlemen of that time. When he left Louisiana forever, although he was under the displeasure of the court, the colonists were loud in expressing their regrets; and whatever faults, inseparable, perhaps, from human nature, he may have committed, his popularity in the province where he had lived to old age, had never been shaken, and he certainly was one of the most honorable and striking characters of the primordial history of Louisiana.

Among the other most conspicuous names in the annals of Louisiana, is that of D'Artaguet, which disappears, however, at the same time when Bienville retires from the colony. The royal commissary of that name, who came to Louisiana in 1708, and who filled in it several high offices until 1742, left behind him a long memory, which made his virtues, his talents, and his

deeds, familiar to several succeeding generations; and the melancholy fate of his younger brother, D'Artaguet, the brilliant officer who fell into the hands of the Chickasaws, after a desperate battle, and who was burned by them at the stake, had, it seems, made such a deep impression in the country, that the name of these two men had remained almost a household word in every family. It may be in the recollection of many that, as late as 1815, gangs of negroes, when at work in the fields, sang, among the many songs with which they enlivened their labors, one of which the often repeated burden was, if spelt in French, as pronounced:—

“Di tems missié d'Artaguet,  
 Hé! Ho! Hé!  
 C'était, c'était bon tems.  
 Yé té ménin monde à la baguette.  
 Hé! Ho! Hé!  
 Pas nègres, pas rubans  
 Pas diamans  
 Pour dochans.  
 Hé! Ho! Hé!”

which means:—

“In the days of D'Artaguet,  
 Hé! Ho! Hé!  
 It was the good old time.  
 The world was led straight with a switch,  
 Hé! Ho! Hé!  
 Then there were no negroes, no ribbons,  
 No diamonds  
 For the vulgar.  
 Hé! Ho! Hé!”

It was also customary to say, when alluding to any thing antiquated, or out of fashion, “This is as old as D'Artaguet,” instead of “This is as old as Methusalem.” It seems that this name, connected no doubt with the

floating recollections of by-gone events, had taken hold of the imagination, even of the most ignorant class of our population.

But with the coming of new generations, the old ditties have ceased, the quaint colonial expressions have fallen into disuse, and the weeds of oblivion are daily creeping over and concealing the vestiges of the past and those traditions which were the impresses of the footsteps of time ; while the hand of neglect destroys, or allows to perish, those private and public manuscripts, which, like fossil bones in the hands of the geologist, might have helped the historian in recomposing the frame and physiognomy of Louisiana, when breathing a colonial life.





# APPENDIX.



# **A P P E N D I X.**

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## **BLACK CODE.**

### **ART. 1,**

**Decrees the expulsion of the Jews from the colony.**

### **ART. 2,**

**Makes it imperative on masters to impart religious instructions to their slaves.**

### **ART. 3,**

**Permits the exercise of the Roman Catholic creed only. Every other mode of worship is prohibited.**

### **ART. 4.**

**Negroes placed under the direction or supervision of any other person than a Catholic, are liable to confiscation.**

### **ART. 5.**

**Sundays and holydays are to be strictly observed. All negroes found at work on these days are to be confiscated.**

### **ART. 6.**

**We forbid our white subjects, of both sexes, to marry with the blacks, under the penalty of being fined and subjected to some other arbitrary punishment. We forbid all curates, priests, or missionaries of our secular or regular clergy, and even our chaplains in our navy, to sanction such marriages. We also forbid all our white subjects, and even the manumitted or free-born blacks, to live in a state of concubinage with slaves. Should there be any issue from this kind of intercourse, it is our will that**

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the person so offending, and the master of the slave, should pay each a fine of three hundred livres. Should said issue be the result of the concubinage of the master with his slave, said master shall not only pay the fine, but be deprived of the slave and of the children, who shall be adjudged to the hospital of the locality, and said slaves shall be forever incapable of being set free. But should this illicit intercourse have existed between a free black and his slave, when said free black had no legitimate wife, and should said black marry said slave according to the forms prescribed by the church, said slave shall be thereby set free, and the children shall also become free and legitimate; and in such a case, there shall be no application of the penalties mentioned in the present article.

ART. 7.

The ceremonies and forms prescribed by the ordinance of Blois, and by the edict of 1639, for marriages, shall be observed both with regard to free persons and to slaves. But the consent of the father and mother of the slave is not necessary; that of the master shall be the only one required.

ART. 8.

We forbid all curates to proceed to effect marriages between slaves without proof of the consent of their masters; and we also forbid all masters to force their slaves into any marriage against their will.

ART. 9.

Children, issued from the marriage of slaves, shall follow the condition of their parents, and shall belong to the master of the wife and not of the husband, if the husband and wife have different masters.

ART. 10.

If the husband be a slave, and the wife a free woman, it is our will that their children, of whatever sex they may be, shall share the condition of their mother, and be as free as she, notwithstanding the servitude of their father; and if the father be free and the mother a slave, the children shall all be slaves.

ART. 11.

Masters shall have their Christian slaves buried in consecrated ground.

ART. 12.

We forbid slaves to carry offensive weapons or heavy sticks, under the penalty of being whipped, and of having said weapons confiscated for the

benefit of the person seizing the same. An exception is made in favor of those slaves who are sent a hunting or a shooting by their masters, and who carry with them a written permission to that effect, or are designated by some known mark or badge.

## ART. 13.

We forbid slaves belonging to different masters to gather in crowds either by day or by night, under the pretext of a wedding, or for any other cause, either at the dwelling or on the grounds of one of their masters, or elsewhere, and much less on the highways or in secluded places, under the penalty of corporal punishment, which shall not be less than the whip. In case of frequent offenses of the kind, the offenders shall be branded with the mark of the flower de luce, and should there be aggravating circumstances, capital punishment may be applied, at the discretion of our judges. We command all our subjects, be they officers or not, to seize all such offenders, to arrest and conduct them to prison, although there should be no judgment against them.

## ART. 14.

Masters who shall be convicted of having permitted or tolerated such gatherings as aforesaid, composed of other slaves than their own, shall be sentenced, individually, to indemnify their neighbors for the damages occasioned by said gatherings, and to pay, for the first time, a fine of thirty livres, and double that sum on the repetition of the offense.

## ART. 15.

We forbid negroes to sell any commodities, provisions, or produce of any kind, without the written permission of their masters, or without wearing their known marks or badges, and any persons purchasing any thing from negroes in violation of this article, shall be sentenced to pay a fine of 1500 livres.

## ART. 16, 17, 18, 19,

Provide at length for the clothing of slaves and for their subsistence.

## ART. 20.

Slaves who shall not be properly fed, clad, and provided for by their masters, may give information thereof to the attorney-general of the Superior Council, or to all the other officers of justice of an inferior jurisdiction, and may put the written exposition of their wrongs into their hands;

upon which information, and even ex officio, should the information come from another quarter, the attorney-general shall prosecute said masters without charging any costs to the complainants. It is our will that this regulation be observed in all accusations for crimes or barbarous and inhuman treatment brought by slaves against their masters.

ART. 21.

Slaves who are disabled from working, either by old age, disease, or otherwise, be the disease incurable or not, shall be fed and provided for by their masters; and in case they should have been abandoned by said masters, said slaves shall be adjudged to the nearest hospital, to which said masters shall be obliged to pay eight cents a day for the food and maintenance of each one of these slaves; and for the payment of this sum, said hospital shall have a lien on the plantations of the master.

ART. 22.

We declare that slaves can have no right to any kind of property, and that all that they acquire either by their own industry, or by the liberality of others, or by any other means or title whatever, shall be the full property of their masters; and the children of said slaves, their fathers and mothers, their kindred or other relations, either free or slaves, shall have no pretensions or claims thereto, either through testamentary dispositions or donations inter vivos; which dispositions and donations we declare null and void, and also whatever promises they may have made, or whatever obligations they may have subscribed to, as having been entered into by persons incapable of disposing of any thing, and of participating to any contract.

ART. 23.

Masters shall be responsible for what their slaves have done by their command; and also for what transactions they have permitted their slaves to do in their shops, in the particular line of commerce with which they were intrusted; and in case said slaves should have acted without the order or authorization of their masters, said masters shall be responsible only for so much as has turned to their profit; and if said masters have not profited by the doing or transaction of their slaves, the peculium which the masters have permitted the slaves to own, shall be subjected to all claims against said slaves, after deduction made by the masters of what may be due to them; and if said peculium should consist, in whole or in part, of merchandises in which the slaves had permission to traffic, the masters shall only come in for their share in common with the other creditors.

## ART. 24.

Slaves shall be incapable of all public functions, and of being constituted agents for any other person than their own masters, with powers to manage or conduct any kind of trade ; nor can they serve as arbitrators or experts ; nor shall they be called to give their testimony either in civil or in criminal cases, except when it shall be a matter of necessity, and only in default of white people ; but in no case shall they be permitted to serve as witnesses either for or against their masters.

## ART. 25.

Slaves shall never be parties to civil suits, either as plaintiffs or defendants, nor shall they be allowed to appear as complainants in criminal cases, but their masters shall have the right to act for them in civil matters, and in criminal ones, to demand punishment and reparation for such outrages and excesses as their slaves may have suffered from.

## ART. 26.

Slaves may be prosecuted criminally, without their masters being made parties to the trial, except they should be indicted as accomplices ; and said slaves shall be tried, at first, by the judges of ordinary jurisdiction, if there be any, and on appeal, by the Superior Council, with the same rules, formalities, and proceedings observed for free persons, save the exceptions mentioned hereafter.

## ART. 27.

The slave who, having struck his master, his mistress, or the husband of his mistress, or their children, shall have produced a bruise, or the shedding of blood in the face, shall suffer capital punishment.

## ART. 28.

With regard to outrages or acts of violence committed by slaves against free persons, it is our will that they be punished with severity, and even with death, should the case require it.

## ART. 29.

Thefts of importance, and even the stealing of horses, mares, mules, oxen, or cows, when executed by slaves or manumitted persons, shall make the offender liable to corporal, and even to capital punishment, according to the circumstances of the case.



case the offense shall be a pardonable one, we permit them to pardon said masters and overseers without its being necessary to obtain from us letters patent of pardon.

ART. 40.

Slaves shall be held in law as movables, and as such, they shall be part of the community of acquests between husband and wife; they shall not be liable to be seized under any mortgage whatever; and they shall be equally divided among the co-heirs without admitting from any one of said heirs any claim founded on preciput or right of primogeniture, or dowry.

ART. 41, 42.

Are entirely relative to judicial forms and proceedings.

ART. 43.

Husbands and wives shall not be seized and sold separately when belonging to the same master; and their children, when under fourteen years of age, shall not be separated from their parents, and such seizures and sales shall be null and void. The present article shall apply to voluntary sales, and in case such sales should take place in violation of the law, the seller shall be deprived of the slave he has illegally retained, and said slave shall be adjudged to the purchaser without any additional price being required.

ART. 44.

Slaves, fourteen years old, and from this age up to sixty, who are settled on lands and plantations, and are at present working on them, shall not be liable to seizure for debt, except for what may be due out of the purchase money agreed to be paid for them, unless said grounds or plantations should also be distressed, and any seizure and judicial sale of a real estate, without including the slaves of the aforesaid age who are part of said estate, shall be deemed null and void.

ART. 45, 46, 47, 48, 49,

Are relative to certain formalities to be observed in judicial proceedings.

ART. 50.

Masters, when twenty-five years old, shall have the power to manumit their slaves, either by testamentary dispositions, or by acts inter vivos. But, as there may be mercenary masters disposed to set a price on the liberation of their slaves; and whereas slaves, with a view to acquire the

necessary means to purchase their freedom, may be tempted to commit theft or deeds of plunder, no person, whatever may be his rank and condition, shall be permitted to set free his slaves, without obtaining from the Superior Council a decree of permission to that effect; which permission shall be granted without costs, when the motives for the setting free of said slaves, as specified in the petition of the master, shall appear legitimate to the tribunal. All future acts for the emancipation of slaves, which may be made without this permission, shall be null; and the slaves so freed shall not be entitled to their freedom; they shall, on the contrary, continue to be held as slaves; but they shall be taken away from their former masters, and confiscated for the benefit of the India Company.

## ART. 51.

However, should slaves be appointed by their masters tutors to their children, said slaves shall be held and regarded as being thereby set free to all intents and purposes.

## ART. 52.

We declare that the acts for the enfranchisement of slaves, passed according to the forms above described, shall be equivalent to an act of naturalization, when said slaves are not born in our colony of Louisiana, and they shall enjoy all the rights and privileges inherent to our subjects born in our kingdom, or in any land or country under our dominion. We declare, however, that all manumitted slaves, and all free-born negroes, are incapable of receiving donations, either by testamentary dispositions, or by acts inter vivos from the whites. Said donations shall be null and void, and the objects so donated shall be applied to the benefit of the nearest hospital.

## ART. 53.

We command all manumitted slaves to show the profoundest respect to their former masters, to their widows and children, and any injury or insult offered by said manumitted slaves to their former masters, their widows or children, shall be punished with more severity than if it had been offered to any other person. We, however, declare them exempt from the discharge of all duties or services, and from the payment of all taxes or fees, or any thing else which their former masters might, in their quality of patrons, claim either in relation to their persons, or to their personal or real estate, either during the life or after the death of said manumitted slaves.

## ART. 54.

We grant to manumitted slaves the same rights, privileges, and immunities which are enjoyed by free-born persons. It is our pleasure that their merit in having acquired their freedom, shall produce in their favor, not only with regard to their persons, but also to their property, the same effects which our other subjects derive from the happy circumstance of their having been born free.

In the name of the king,

BIENVILLE, DE LA CHAISE.

Fazende, Bruslé, Perry, }  
March, 1724.

THE END

**H I S T O R Y**  
**OF**  
**L O U I S I A N A .**

**THE FRENCH DOMINATION.**

**BY**  
**C H A R L E S   G A Y A R R É .**

**VOL. II.**



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PREFACE

TO THE THIRD SERIES

OF

LECTURES ON LOUISIANA.

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THIS is the third and last series of the Historical Lectures on Louisiana, embracing a period which extends from its discovery to 1769, when it was finally transferred by the French to the Spaniards, in virtue of the Fontainebleau treaty signed in November, 1763. This work is, as far as I could make it so, a detailed and accurate history of Louisiana, as a French colony.

The four lectures which I delivered on the "Poetry or Romance of the History of Louisiana," and which are reproduced in the preceding volume as an introduction to a composition of a more grave nature, I looked upon at the time as *nugæ seriæ*, to which I attached no more importance, than a child does to the soap bubbles which he puffs through the tube of the tiny reed, picked up by him for the amusement of the passing hour. But struck with the interest which I had excited, I examined with more sober thoughts the flowery field in which I had sported, almost with the buoyancy of a school-boy. Checking the freaks of my imagination, that boon companion with whom I had been gamboling, I took to the plough, broke the ground, and turned myself to a more serious and useful occupation. This is, I think, clearly observed in the second

series of Lectures. In the third and last series, which I now venture to lay before the public, a change of tone and manner, corresponding with the authenticity and growing importance of the events which I had to record, will be still more perceptible.

Should the continuation of life and the enjoyment of leisure permit me to gratify my wishes, I purpose to write the history of the Spanish domination in Louisiana, from 1769 to 1803, when was effected the almost simultaneous cession of that province, by Spain to France, and by France to the United States of America. Embracing an entirely distinct period of history, it will be a different work from the preceding, as much perhaps in point of style and the other elements of composition, as with regard to the characteristic features of the new lords of the land.

Whatever may be the defects of this work (and they are numerous), their exposure cannot give me pain by defeating me in the pursuit of what I never aimed at—literary reputation. But notwithstanding their existence, I may be permitted to congratulate myself upon having thrown some light and interest on a subject, so far very little known—the history of the land of my birth; I rest satisfied with having been an humble pioneer, and with having erected in the wilderness the modest wooden structure, which, I hope, will soon give way to more stately edifices, showing the elegant proportions of a more classical architecture.

I beg leave, in conclusion, to refer those who think that the history of Louisiana which I have submitted to the public, is indebted to my imagination for many of its romantic incidents, and who may be willing to test the accuracy of my historical statements, to works, not of recent date, the authorship of which is attributed to Bossu, Perrin du Lac, Charlevoix, Pittman, Dumont, Le Page du Pratz, Hennepin, Lahontan, Baudry des Lozières, Laharpe, and Laval: and I also refer to voluminous manuscripts copied from

the archives of France and Spain, and which have become the property of the State. These are my vouchers, and I have nothing to fear from their examination, however minute and critical it may be, with regard to the detection of any intentional errors on my part, conscious as I am, that, in the composition of this work, I have been animated with the same feelings which must glow in the breast of a devoted son, who attempts truthfully and scrupulously to reproduce and to perpetuate, with the painter's art, the perishing features of a cherished mother.

BATON ROUGE, *July 15th*, 1851.



# LOUISIANA:

## ITS

### HISTORY AS A FRENCH COLONY.

#### THIRD SERIES.

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#### FIRST LECTURE.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE MARQUIS OF VAUDREUIL AS GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA—ANECDOTES ILLUSTRATING HIS CHARACTER—THE CHICKASAWS SUE FOR PEACE—VAUDREUIL'S ANSWER—ORDINANCE CONCERNING LEVEES—EFFECTS OF THE PAPER CURRENCY IN THE COLONY—MONOPOLY OF TRADE GRANTED TO DÉRUISSEAU—DISCOVERIES OF MINES OF LEAD, COPPER AND IRON—NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE INDIANS—DEPREDATIONS COMMITTED BY THE CHICKASAWS—POPULATION OF NEW ORLEANS IN 1745, SITUATION OF THE COLONY—MISUNDERSTANDINGS BETWEEN COMMISSARY LENORMANT AND GOVERNOR VAUDREUIL—OUTRAGE COMMITTED BY RED SHOE—REPORTS ON THE MOUTHS AND SAND-BARS OF THE MISSISSIPPI—MEANS OF DEFENCE ADOPTED TO PROTECT LOUISIANA AGAINST INVASION—TERRIBLE HURRICANE—FINANCES OF THE COLONY—PAPER MONEY AND STOCK-JOB-BING—CIVIL WAR AMONG THE CHOCTAWS—A PARTY OF THEM ATTACK THE GERMAN COAST—GREAT ALARM—ASSASSINATION OF RED SHOE—INCREASE OF THE INDIAN DISTURBANCES—DARING OF THE CHOCTAWS—COWARDICE OF TIXERANT—HEROISM OF TWO NEGROES—DESPERATE RESISTANCE OF BABY, THE DANCING MASTER, WHEN ATTACKED BY THE CHOCTAWS—COMMERCE OF THE COLONY—ENCOURAGEMENT GIVEN TO AGRICULTURE—YIELD OF THE WAX TREE—THE CREOLES DECLARED FITTEST MEN TO WAGE WAR AGAINST THE INDIANS—CRUSHING BLOW GIVEN BY GRAND-PRÉ TO THE CHOCTAWS—HIS TREATY OF PEACE WITH THAT NATION—LARGE FORCES SENT TO LOUISIANA—COUNTERFEITING OF THE PAPER MONEY OF THE COLONY BY A COLORED MAN—HIS PUNISHMENT—GRANDE-PRÉ MADE A KNIGHT OF ST. LOUIS—ORIGIN OF THE GRAND-PRÉ FAMILY IN LOUISIANA—QUARRELS BETWEEN VAUDREUIL AND THE COMMISSARY MICHEL DE LA ROUVILLIERE, THE SUCCESSOR OF LENORMANT—SUGAR CANES SENT TO THE JESUITS OF LOUISIANA—ARRIVAL OF SIXTY GIRLS—MANNER IN WHICH THEY WERE SETTLED IN THE COLONY—FRUITLESS EXPEDITION OF VAUDREUIL AGAINST THE CHICKASAWS—ANECDOTE OF THE COLAPISSA FATHER—DEATH OF LA ROUVILLIERE—HE IS SUCCEEDED BY D'AUBERVILLE—VAUDREUIL SENT TO CANADA—KERLEREC, GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA IN FEBRUARY, 1753.

The appointment of the Marquis of Vaudreuil as Governor of Louisiana, in the place of Bienville, pro-



duced a favorable impression on the colonists, and gave rise to flattering hopes. It was known that the Marquis was the son of a distinguished officer who had been Governor-general of Canada, and that he belonged to an influential family at the French court. His nomination was received as a token that the government intended to make serious efforts to put the colony on a more respectable footing, and it was presumed that the Marquis would not have accepted the post of a petty governor in so insignificant a colony, if he had not received promises that the province over which he had been called to rule, would soon be destined, under the powerful patronage of the mother country, to acquire more importance than it had so far possessed. His arrival in the colony was therefore hailed with joy, as the harbinger of better days. That joy rested also on the knowledge of the hereditary reputation of all the Vaudreuils for kindness and liberality. With respect to these qualifications, the present Governor of Louisiana was no unworthy representative of his ancestors. A few anecdotes related of him will fully illustrate his character.

It happened that one of his servants acted with insolence towards an officer of the garrison in New Orleans, who had come to pay his respects to the governor on one of his reception days. The Marchioness having been informed of the fact, brought it to the knowledge of her husband, and insisted on the culprit being dismissed. De Vaudreuil acquiesced in a demand which he thought just, and consented to part with that servant, although a favorite one. He sent for his privy purse, and after having paid the wages due to the servant, he added a bounty of three hundred livres. His wife expostulated with him on this strange piece of

liberality, and observed that it was offering a reward to impertinence. Unmoved, and without returning an answer, the Marquis threw again three hundred livres to the lacquey, and seeing the flush of anger rising on his wife's brow: "Madam," said he, with great composure, "I do not reward him for his insolence, but for his former fidelity, and if you show too much displeasure to the poor devil, I will give him the whole purse, to indemnify him for his having incurred the mortification which you now inflict upon him."

An officer of the garrison wrote against him to the minister of marine. The minister transmitted the letter to De Vaudreuil. One day, the same officer was addressing some gross flattery to the Marquis, who stood it for a while, but the dose becoming too nauseating, "What conduct is this?" exclaimed the Marquis, "How dare you thus give the lie to your own written assertions? Is it possible that you should so soon have forgotten a certain letter which you have written against me?" "A letter against you, General, and from me?" "Yes, sir." "I swear that nothing can be more false." "Beware, sir; do not force me to look for that letter, for if you compel me to take that trouble, I will immediately have your commission taken away from you." The officer did not reply, and never, from that moment, did the Marquis open his lips on the subject, or show by any act that he remembered the circumstance.

It also happened that a menial in his household had lost or mislaid a valuable piece of plate. The Marquis was at table when the offence was discovered, and the guilty one, trembling with emotion, and overwhelmed, with shame at his being accused of so much negligence, and perhaps of theft, was brought up to his presence. The Marquis, at first, looked at him with

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some severity of countenance, but his face soon resumed its usual benevolent expression, and turning to his butler, he said: "Get a bottle of my best wine, and give it to this poor fellow to cure him of his fright." This is enough; no more can be wanted to give the measure of De Vaudreuil's heart.

Bienville, on his departure from the colony, had left it at war with the Chickasaws. These Indians, on their being informed that a new governor had arrived, sent to him four of their chiefs, with a Frenchman, their prisoner, named Carignan, to sue for peace. Vaudreuil answered that he would not treat with them, except it were in concert with his allies, the Choctaws, to whom they should make ample amends for all the injuries they had inflicted upon them at the instigation of the English, and except they should drive away from their villages the English traders, who, he said, were the authors of all their misfortunes. The Chickasaws took time to consider these conditions.

The necessity of providing against the ever threatening overflows of the Mississippi had struck De Vaudreuil, and jointly with Salmon, the king's commissary, he published, on the 18th of October, an ordinance which commanded the planters to have their levees made, or in a safe condition, by the 1st of January, 1744, under the penalty of forfeiting their lands to the crown. Evidently, this penalty was sufficiently stringent to secure the execution of the ordinance. Thus closed the year 1743, during which the expenses of the administration of the colony amounted to 348,528 livres.

In the beginning of 1744, the Chickasaws informed De Vaudreuil that they would accept his conditions, and dismiss the English traders from their villages, if the

French could supply them with all the goods, merchandise and ammunition, of which they stood in need. This De Vaudreuil could not do, nor could he promise to do, without exposing himself to a breach of faith; and with no small degree of concern did he learn that the Chickasaws were negotiating with the Choctaws, to conclude a treaty of peace with them, without including the French. On this state of things, he wrote to his government: "I will do my best to defeat these negotiations, which, if successful, would be ruinous to the colony. We must not forget that we are in a state of the utmost destitution, that our warehouses are empty, and that, between us, who can only make *fair promises*, and the English, who can *give*, the Indians cannot hesitate in their choice. Many of them have already carried their furs to the English, and this example will be contagious. All that I can do is, to insinuate to the Choctaws that the Chickasaws are not in good faith in their proposals for peace, and that probably their only object is to lull their enemies into unguarded security, and to strike an unexpected blow upon them, or perhaps that they seek, under cover of their pretended negotiations for peace, to keep the Choctaws in a state of inaction, and in the mean time quietly to get in their harvests." The Marquis concluded his despatch by endeavoring to impress upon the government his conviction of the necessity of forwarding to him, as soon as possible, an ample supply of goods and merchandise.

Vaudreuil had found the colony in a deplorable financial condition. It will be recollected that the government had, in 1735, contrary to the advice of Bienville and Salmon, called in the depreciated paper money of the India Company, and had replaced it by pasteboard notes, (*billets de cartes*,) which, it was said,

offered an infinitely better security than the preceding one, because the king's paper was not to be weighed in the same scale with the Company's paper. But hardly had nine years elapsed, when this royal paper was as much depreciated as its more modest predecessor. The depreciation was such, that it was necessary to give three hundred livres in paper for what might have been got for one hundred livres in coin. On the 27th of April, the council of state declared that it considered this condition of things as prejudicial to the finances of the government, the welfare of the colony, and the progress of commerce, and that it had resolved to put an end to such disorders. It, therefore, determined to call in all pasteboard notes, and to pay one hundred livres for every two hundred and fifty livres worth of paper. Such was the rate established, and the mode of payment was not in specie, but consisted in giving drafts on the treasury in France. On these drafts the holders had again to lose a discount. It was also decreed, that all the pasteboard notes which should not be brought in within two months after the promulgation of this edict, should become null and void. In support of the justice of this high-handed and arbitrary measure, it was stated that the government did not feel under the obligation to take up those notes at par, because they had been given to meet expenses and claims which had been raised in proportion to the actual or expected depreciation of the currency in which these were to be paid. Such was the impotent apology offered by the government for its shameless breach of faith, and the poor, helpless colonists had to be satisfied with it. They had found out, too late, that the *King's paper*, although it went by a more lofty name, was as much of a worthless rag as the *Company's paper*.

Unfortunately, the Marquis of Vaudreuil marked the beginning of his administration by following the old nefarious custom of granting monopolies. On the 8th of August, he conceded to a man named Déruisseau, the exclusive right of trading in all the country watered by the Missouri and the streams falling into that river. This privilege was for a term a little exceeding five years, beginning on the 1st of January, 1745, to terminate on the 20th of May, 1750. To this grant several conditions were annexed, among which were these :—Déruisseau bound himself to finish the fort established on the Missouri territory, to keep in it a sufficient stock of merchandise to satisfy the wants of the Indians, to maintain, at his own expense, the several Indian tribes of that district in a state of amity among themselves and with the French, to supply the garrison of the fort with the necessary means of subsistence, to pay to its commander an annual bounty of one hundred pistoles, and to transport to the fort, without charge, all the provisions and effects of that commander. It was stipulated by the governor, that he reserved to himself the right to modify, change, or alter any of the conditions of the grant, according to circumstances, and in the way which the prosperity of the country might require.

In rendering an account of what he had done, De Vaudreuil said, in a despatch of the 6th of December, that one of his reasons for granting to Déruisseau the monopoly of trade in the Illinois district was, to deprive the colonists in that region of all means of carrying on any kind of commerce with the Indians, and thus to force them into the cultivation of the soil. He added : “It would be proper to prohibit the introduction of

negroes into that part of the country, in order to correct the indolent habits of the colonists, and to oblige them to work themselves. Moreover, negroes would be more productive in the lower part of the colony. It would not be expedient to allow negroes to be taken up to the Illinois, except when the white inhabitants should be weaned from their life of wandering and plunder, and when, having assumed sedentary habits, they should at least be occupied in causing their negroes to cultivate their lands. I send samples from the mines of lead and copper which we continue to discover in Illinois. To work these mines, it would be necessary to send convicts."

The discovery and working of mines had always been the favorite object which the French government had kept in view, and De Vaudreuil encouraged the same delusion. It is difficult to imagine how the working of those mines could have been carried on with success in those days. The colony could not subsist on its own resources, and provisions had to be sent from the mother country. So scarce were those provisions, that, if all the despatches of the governors are to be taken to the letter as true, the inhabitants, since the very first day of the settlement of the colony, had always been on the eve of starvation. De Vaudreuil himself, in a letter of the 28th of October, 1744, wrote: "If flour had not arrived by the *Elephant*, the troops would have revolted on account of the want of food." In such circumstances how could several hundreds of workmen have been supported in the mines of Arkansas, or of Illinois? How difficult would it not have been to furnish them with all the necessaries for their mining operations? What returns would have indemnified the government for its enormous



outlays? It is astonishing that these considerations should not have precluded the very conception of any project of the kind.

It will be recollected that, shortly after the arrival of the Marquis of Vaudreuil in the colony, the Chickasaws had made proposals for peace, but the Marquis had answered that he would not treat with them separately from his allies, the Choctaws; and when the Choctaws showed themselves favorably disposed towards the Chickasaws, he, under some pretext or other, postponed the consideration of the peace negotiations which had been opened by the Chickasaws, and succeeded at last in reviving the old hatred of these two tribes, and in renewing their acts of hostility, which had been temporarily suspended. Red Shoe, whose intrigues and tamperings with the English had so long been a source of uneasiness to the French, had even been gained over by the diplomacy of the Marquis. The fact is that the policy of the French was to keep the Indian tribes at war with each other, in order to waste away their strength and power. The Indians were not so simple as not to be fully aware of the game that was played upon them. But, by the contact of the civilization of a superior race, they had been inspired with wants which they could not shake off, and had by this means been put under the complete dependency of these two European nations, the French and the English, on which they had now to rely for the gratification of their newly acquired tastes and vices. The nature of the Indian was not such as to enable him to resist the tempting baits constantly thrown in his way by the two great rivals who, with mutual jealousy, were ever struggling for mastery over his tribes; and those ignorant children of the forest were, almost without interruption, driven into



some acts leading rapidly to their destruction. Divided among themselves, they were to meet the fate which had befallen, under such circumstances, other far more powerful and more enlightened nations, and they certainly were entirely destitute of the necessary means to oppose an efficient obstacle to the wave of foreign invasion which was gradually gaining ground upon them. They were doomed !

On the 2d of January, 1745, the Marquis of Vaudreuil announced to his government the discovery of an iron mine in the Mobile district, and other mines of the same metal in Illinois; but these discoveries did not lead to any practical results, and prove only one thing—that the experience of forty-five years had not convinced the French of the inutility of these fruitless and expensive researches.

During the whole of the year 1745, the Chickasaws proved very troublesome, and committed depredations which carried desolation and alarm throughout the colony. Red Shoe, with his accustomed versatility, had again become the ally of the English, and had even seduced his old rival, Alibamon Mengo, the hitherto constant friend of the French. But, although the French had thus lost the favor of the Cæsar and of the Pompey of the Choctaws, they still retained numerous friends among them, and the French and English factions, as they were called, became so excited that they nearly resorted to blows. On the 28th of October, the Marquis of Vaudreuil wrote to his government: “The Chickasaws, in spite of our efforts to rouse the hostility of all the other Indian nations against them, cannot be destroyed, except it be through another French expedition. Delay increases the difficulties, because these people become every day more familiar with the art of war, and

they are gradually enlisting the sympathies of the Cherokees, who are powerful auxiliaries. All expeditions of this nature have been so unsuccessful, that I well conceive the reluctance of the government to renew the attempt. But the roads being now better known, we can accomplish more, and at less expense. Two hundred recruits, in addition to the regulars and militia we already have here, would be all that is wanted. To avoid exposing our men, we would, in attacking the strongholds of the Chickasaws, have recourse to trenching and mining. In having them partially attacked and harassed, we have to spend much in presents to our Indian auxiliaries. It would be better to make short work of it, and to bring this matter to a conclusion." The Marquis closed his despatch by complaining of being entirely destitute of provisions, merchandise and ammunition, and informed his government that the Choctaws were tired of their war against the Chickasaws.

De Loubois, who was one of the oldest and most influential officers in the colony, advocated the same course which the Marquis of Vaudreuil was recommending, and, in a despatch of the 6th of November, strenuously insisted on the importance of forcing the Chickasaws to drive away the English, who, he said, had *avowed territorial pretensions extending to the left bank of the Mississippi*. For this reason, he agreed with De Vaudreuil in the conclusion, that another expedition against the Chickasaws was necessary.

In a document presented to the French government in 1744, the white population of New Orleans was put down at eight hundred souls, not including two hundred soldiers and the women and children. The black population did not exceed three hundred. A few of the houses were of brick, and the greater portion

were wooden buildings, or were bricked up between posts.

"There are," said the author of a census of the colony at the time, "twenty-five inhabitants whose property may be worth from one hundred thousand to three hundred thousand livres. Almost all the colonists are married. The most considerable of them is Mr. Dubreuil, who owns five hundred negroes, several plantations, brick kilns, and silk manufactories."

"At the German Coast there are one hundred white inhabitants and two hundred negroes. Occupations: gardening and grazing."

"Pointe Coupée two hundred whites, four hundred negroes. Occupation: the cultivation of tobacco and the raising of provisions."

"Natchitoches, sixty whites and two hundred blacks. Productions: cattle, rice, corn, tobacco."

#### GENERAL TABLEAU.

	White inhabitants (male).	Blacks of both sexes.
At the Balize, . . . . .	troops only, no settlers,	30
New Orleans, . . . . .	800	300
German Coast, . . . . .	100	200
Pointe Coupée, . . . . .	200	400
Natchitoches, . . . . .	60	200
Natchez, . . . . .	8	15
Arkansas, . . . . .	12	10
Illinois, . . . . .	300	600
Missouri, . . . . .	200	10
Petit Ougas, . . . . .	40	5
Pascagoulas, . . . . .	10	60
Mobile, . . . . .	150	200
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1700	2020
Women and children about . . . . .	1500	
	<hr/>	
	3200	
Troops, . . . . .	800	
	<hr/>	
	4000	

The old and the new Biloxi, the Pass Christian, and the Bay of St. Louis, where the first French settlements had been made, seem to have been entirely forgotten in this table, and yet they must certainly have retained some of the early settlers or their descendants. Taking into consideration omissions of this kind, and putting down the colonial population at 3500, it shows a remarkable decrease since 1731, when Louisiana was retroceded to the king by the India Company, at which time its population was estimated at 5000. This was a very discouraging proof of an absolute failure, so far, in the work of colonization, and yet the annual expenses of administration had been gradually increased, and now exceeded 500,000 livres.

Salmon, who had been for many years the King's commissary in the colony, had been succeeded by Lenormant, who had hardly entered upon the duties of his office, when he began to quarrel with the Marquis of Vaudreuil. The governor, in a despatch of the 6th of January, 1746, informed his government that the commissary retained for his private use, all the merchandise which he ought to have delivered as presents to the Indians, and that he had them retailed by his clerk to the inhabitants. By which operation, the Marquis pretended that Lenormant realized enormous profits. On the 9th of March, De Vaudreuil reiterated his complaints against Lenormant, whom he accused of starving the troops and of failing to supply the different settlements in the colony with the necessary provisions, and the Indians with the merchandise that they had a right to expect. "By his fault," said he, "I am placed in a very difficult position, being destitute of the means of paying for scalps and of remunerating our Indian friends and allies."

On the 22d of March, De Vaudreuil arrived at Mobile, where twelve hundred Choctaws had long been waiting for him, and for the usual distribution of presents by which the French used to secure their services. The celebrated Red Shoe had remained at home, and during the absence of the chiefs most favorable to the French, was intriguing to bring about a peace between the Choctaws and Chickasaws. But the chiefs who had gone to Mobile, arrived in time to defeat his machinations. In his anger at being thus foiled, he killed a French officer named the Chevalier de Verbois, and two French traders, who then happened to be among the Choctaws, and whose goods he plundered. On being informed of this outrage, De Vaudreuil immediately sent an officer to demand satisfaction, and obtained the promise that it would be granted.

Towards the end of the year 1745, the engineer Devergès had presented to the French government a memorial on the mouths of the Mississippi. "The bars," said he, "which are to be found at the mouths of the river, are so many serious obstructions. The pass which is the deepest, and which has been the only practicable one since 1722, when it was examined and became thoroughly known, is that of the Balize, where ships drawing from thirteen to fifteen feet water, have been able to run through with more or less facility, in proportion to the depth of the water on the bar; and it has ever since been observed that it has varied from eleven feet to fourteen feet and a half, so that it was but seldom that vessels drawing from thirteen to fifteen feet water could pass without stranding, and without making use of the warp, even after having been lightened of half their cargoes. This pass measures in width from thirty to forty fathoms, and the current is very rapid."

On the 24th of November, 1746, the Marquis of Vaudreuil wrote to his government: "On being apprised of the declaration of war, I visited the mouths of the Mississippi. From the mobility of the passes, and from the want of solidity in the land bordering on those passes, it is nearly impossible to think of erecting fortifications there. It is only necessary to preserve the fort which already exists at the Balize, less on account of its being effective as a means of defence, than because it serves as a place of depot for our commerce with the Spaniards. Besides, it is useful to maintain a post there, from which we can keep watch over the sea coast, and get timely information as to what may be going on in the gulf."

France being at war, it became necessary to provide for the defence of Louisiana. The spot which, on the Mississippi, seemed the most eligible for the construction of fortifications, was the *Plaquemine Turn*, then considered as being thirty-three miles from the Balize. It was the first solid ground to be met with on coming from sea, and on that account had been selected by the Commissary Lenormant. "This reason appeared to me," said De Vaudreuil, in one of his despatches, "to be a good one, and I agreed to it, because fortifications erected at that spot would have protected that considerable portion of the country lying between New Orleans and Plaquemine Turn. But on reflection, I observed (and the same observation struck with equal force both the engineer and the port-master), that the situation of that Turn presented no obstacles to ships, which being once under weigh, could run up beyond it by the help of the same wind which had enabled them to come through the pass. It would be impossible to stop them with the ten eighteen-pounders which are the only pieces of artillery

we can set up on each side of the river, because, availing themselves of a fresh breeze, the ships would have but one discharge to stand, and would be out of the reach of our guns before they could be fired at a second time. To command that passage, it would be necessary to have at least three batteries of twenty heavy guns on each side of the river, close to each other, and this would cost immense sums."

De Vaudreuil also stated, that the distance from that spot to New Orleans was another objection, because, if fortifications were constructed there, they would require a permanent garrison, which, in time of need, would not receive with sufficient promptitude the assistance it might want from New Orleans.

"Besides," continues De Vaudreuil, "it has struck me that the only spot on the river which we could use to advantage, with our twenty eighteen-pounders, is the *English Turn*, which is fifteen miles distant from New Orleans, and is a natural fortification against ships that are stopped there by the same east and south-west winds which had been so favorable to come up so far. Ships cannot turn round that point without the south-west wind, which but seldom blows from July to January, the very time when the conquest of the country is to be undertaken with better chances of success, because the river is low. But supposing that the ships of the enemy should be favored with a south-west wind, they would hardly get round the Turn and ascend four miles and a half, when this very wind would become unfavorable, and they would be obliged to wait for an easterly wind to move on. Moreover, it must be observed that there are between the plantations established at the Turn, large wooded tracts of land, thick with intertwined briers, brambles and canes, forming impenetrable jungles

which terminate in swamps, cut up with deep water courses and leading to quagmires. Through such a country, protected by good intrenchments and defended by some troops, it would be the height of temerity to penetrate.

“ Another advantage would be, the great facility to concentrate there all our forces. These were my reasons for not hesitating in giving the preference to that spot. Therefore I have determined to establish on each side of the river, at those points where ships must come to catch the south-west winds, a fort made up of mud and fascines, with epaulments, the shelving sides of which are to be fenced and secured with hurdles, according to the plans and drawings of Devergès. For the construction of these fortifications, I have ordered, jointly with Mr. Lenormant, the inhabitants of New Orleans and of the neighboring country to send the fifth of their negroes during six weeks. I hope that, in ten days, there will be a battery of ten eighteen-pounders in each fort. It would be proper to send sixteen twenty-four-pounders with their balls, and fourteen eighteen-pounders, to fill all the embrasures which overlook the river. The intrenchments on the land side would be sufficiently fortified with the four ten-pounders we have at New Orleans. With this additional supply, the colony would be susceptible of defence.”

It will be recollected that Bienville had been of opinion that fortifications could be erected at the Balize; and that he had, in 1741, contracted with Dubreuil for the partial construction of fortifications, for which he had agreed to pay 297,382 livres. The engineer Devergès had also decided in favor of the possibility of erecting effective fortifications at the Balize, and had estimated their cost at 532,408 livres. The Marquis of Vaudreuil



entertained, as it is seen, a different view of the question, and preferred the English Turn; but modern engineers have declared in favor of the site chosen by Lenormant, the Plaquemine Turn, where now stand the fortifications called Forts Jackson and St. Philip.

On the 26th of November, the Marquis wrote to the French government: "I received, in September last, the letter of the 6th of May, in which I was informed that three ships of the line and one frigate had left England in the month of April, under the command of Admiral Knowles, who was to stop at Antigua and then at Jamaica. It is supposed that this armament is destined to operate against Louisiana. I have also been informed that General Oglethorpe was to return shortly to Georgia with additional troops, and that perhaps Admiral Knowles would combine with him in Florida. I gave information of it to the Governors of Pensacola, St. Marc and St. Augustin.

"I am prepared for any event that may occur. I have the strong will to be equal to the emergency, whatever it may be, but I am sadly deficient in means to back this will. I have nothing wherewith to defend the East Pass, where a new channel has formed itself in the parts nearest to the Balize. This channel is from fifteen to sixteen feet deep on the bar at low water, and measures in length two hundred fathoms, through the battures which advance most into the sea, in the shape of a horse-shoe. This channel is divided into three outlets, or mouths. Two of these outlets are from ten to twenty-five fathoms in width each, and the third from thirty to forty, and they are separated from each other by battures and mounds of loam, or unctuous, slimy and adhesive earth emerging from the sea. The largest of these outlets is on the right as you come in. We have labored

to fortify this new pass with the help of the planters, who would have coöperated with more efficiency and readiness, if Mr. Lenormant had treated them differently. But he has even refused to supply them with the necessary tools, with provisions for the subsistence of their negroes, and with means of transportation. Latterly he went so far as to undertake to force them to complete the fortifications, to the injury of their crops. It was an unjust pretension which was beginning to irritate the planters. I thought it proper, therefore, not to allow him to push the thing farther.

“With regard to the forces of the colony, I can dispose of four hundred white men, five or six hundred Indians belonging to the small nations, and from two to three hundred negroes who are to be relied upon. But we are wanting in arms and ammunition.”

This was Louisiana in 1746. We have had its substitute under our eye in 1846. What a transformation! What a tale of wonder! It beggars comment!

Miserable as it was, the colony's situation was made still worse by a hurricane, as terrible as those which had committed such damage in 1740. A portion of the crops was destroyed, and the lower part of Louisiana would have been exposed to famine, if assistance had not promptly come from the Illinois district, which annually supplied New Orleans with a great quantity of flour. The boats from Illinois used to arrive at that town towards the end of December, and to depart in January. In those days, it is certain that hurricanes were more frequent than in ours. Nor is it to be wondered at, since it is well known that the physical laws which rule a wilderness are greatly modified, in proportion as it is gradually converted into the abode of civilization. It seems that, as a reward for the

patient and persevering labor of man, nature disrobes herself of her primitive rudeness, and that the elements, ceasing their old struggles, are soothed into gentleness.

Lenormant, whose province it was, in his capacity of intendant commissary, to preside over the finances of the colony, made on them a report, in which he said: "As soon as the paper money began to lose its value, there was an eager demand for dollars, which were bought at higher or lower prices, in proportion to the wants of purchasers, and the cupidity or speculating avidity of sellers. Hence the origin of all the jobbing which took place in the colony, in relation to bills of exchange and dollars. It increased considerably during the years 1741, 1742 and 1743, but it would be difficult to convey an accurate idea of the ferment which sprung up in the colony on that occasion, of the number of transactions incidental thereto, and of the skill with which several individuals availed themselves of these circumstances, to the detriment of the interests of the King and the welfare of the colony.

"With regard to the question, whether it would be proper to venture on another emission of paper money, I think that it would be attended with considerable difficulties, inasmuch as the quantity of paper to be emitted cannot be known in advance, no more than the expenses of the colony, to which it is to be proportioned.

"Everything is to be feared from the avidity of the inhabitants of this colony, and from their disposition to stock-jobbing. Their industry, of which a better use might have been made, has, at all times, taken this bad direction; for, although jobbing on the paper currency of the colony, on dollars and bills of exchange, began only in 1737, jobbing on the merchandise in the king's

warehouses, and on everything which was susceptible of it, has always been a favorite occupation in the colony. It may be said that it is the only pursuit to which the inhabitants have steadily adhered, much to the prejudice of the nobler one of improving the lands, and in utter disregard of other resources, which, if attended to, would put the colony in a flourishing condition.

“I admit that another emission of paper money will afford relief to the treasury of the marine department at home ; but a relief which would only be temporary, and would not exceed the duration of one year, would not counterbalance the risks which are inseparable from the introduction and existence of this kind of currency in the country.”

Thus Lenormant wrote in anticipation, a century ago, the history of the deleterious effects of a system, which we lately saw stretched to its fullest extent, until its apparently strong texture snapped under the hands by which it had been woven. But the hotch-potch of corruption, of financial gambling, of frantic stock-jobbing and of thieving speculation, the mushroom wealth of the few amidst the sudden ruin of the many, and the mass of lasting depravation and misery which appalled our sight, from the year 1835 to 1843, threw into the shade all the foregone calamities which paper money, ill advised and more foolishly applied, had entailed upon the colony since its foundation. The historical records of the world teem with the similarity of causes and effects through the long avenue of ages, on which the eye of study looks back with distinct vision, but it may be more than doubted whether, from the observation of past events and its deductions, any practical lesson has ever been derived for the benefit of mankind.

On the 11th of May, in the year 1747, the Marquis of

Vaudreuil, to put an end to the doubts which had arisen as to the precise extent of the New Orleans district, decreed that it began at the mouth of the Mississippi, including both banks up to the German Settlement exclusively, above New Orleans, and that it embraced also Bayou St. John, and that part of the country, back of the town, which was originally called Chantilly, from the princely seat of the Condés in France ; but which, in our days, is known under the appellation of Gentilly, into which Chantilly has been gradually corrupted.

The fear of being attacked by the English still haunted the Marquis of Vaudreuil, and, in a despatch of the 15th of May, he communicated to his government the precautionary measures of defence which he had taken. There being but seven or eight feet water over the Balize bar, which was rapidly filling up, he removed the guns from the fort which defended this mouth of the Mississippi, and withdrew two-thirds of the garrison, leaving but one eight-pounder and two four-pounders, with a detachment of fifteen soldiers and one pilot, to fire signal guns when necessary, for the benefit of the French ships. The officer who had the command of this detachment was instructed to be on the look-out, and to abandon his post and run up to New Orleans with his men, whenever he should descry together several ships of the enemy. De Vaudreuil considered that the East Pass was the one through which the English were likely to come, as it was seventeen feet deep, and the French ship, the *Camel*, had lately got over the bar with the greatest facility. "I send," wrote De Vaudreuil, "two plans and estimates for two forts, one of which is to be at the Plaquemine Turn, a situation which Lenormant still continues to extol. In addition to the reasons which I have already given against selecting that spot, I must say that the

ground is only two feet and a half above the lowest water-mark, and is covered with one foot water when the river overflows. Moreover, it is probable that the ground is not sufficiently solid to sustain works of fortification, and such is the opinion of the engineer Devergès, whose knowledge is matured by long experience. At the English turn, the ground is raised nine or ten feet above the lowest water-mark, and can bear the weight of any kind of work. It is urgent to determine, as soon as possible, on the choice of the site which is to be fortified."

Thus the French government had the unpleasant prospect of a large amount of additional expenses to be incurred for the protection of Louisiana, when the current expenses of the colony, for 1747, had already, before the expiration of the year, exceeded those of the preceding ones, and had risen to 500,445 livres.

When the year 1748 dawned upon the colony, the apprehension of British invasion had not abated, and the insecurity of the colonists was made greater by the feeling of enmity against the French which had been gradually instilled into a considerable portion of the Choctaw nation. It will be recollected that, in 1746, Red Shoe had murdered the Chevalier de Verbois and several traders, for which deed no satisfaction had as yet been given, in spite of the repeated demands and exertions of the Marquis of Vaudreuil. At the beginning of 1748, the animosity between the French and the English party among the Choctaws ran so high, that it broke into a civil war. The Choctaws of the English party were in the minority, and were therefore called *rebels*. They divided into small bands to make excursions against the French, and they proved exceedingly troublesome. One of these bands attacked the German Settlement above

New Orleans, on the left bank of the river, killed a white man, wounded his wife, and made his daughter a prisoner. They also carried away three black men and two black women. This attack spread such consternation, that most of the planters abandoned their houses, and came down to New Orleans with their negroes. To send them back, it was necessary to use threats, and to give them, as a guarantee of protection, a strong detachment of troops to escort them to their deserted homes. But, when after a short stay, the detachment returned to New Orleans, rumors of danger began to be so rife again, that most of the planters on the German Coast, who were on the left side of the river, crossed over to the right side, where they had to go through the laborious operation of clearing the ground of its timber and wild cane, whilst they had abandoned, through exaggerated apprehensions, well cultivated lands, comfortable dwellings, and a considerable number of cattle ; but their fear of the Indians had overcome all other considerations. ' Such was the alarm which prevailed, at that time, even in the very vicinity of New Orleans !

The Choctaw who, at the head of a small band, had attacked the German settlement, was, on his return to his village, killed by his own brother and chief, who belonged to the French party ; and a brother of Red Shoe, who had been sent to Carolina to claim assistance from the English, was assailed at the Kaouitas and lost eight men. On the 14th of July, the Choctaws of the French party surprised a village of the English party and killed thirteen men, among whom were some distinguished chiefs. The Choctaws friendly to the English, being determined to have their revenge, attacked in their turn, on the 16th of August, a village of the opposite faction. The fight was more obstinate than is generally the case in Indian



warfare, and the losses were heavy on both sides, but the allies of the English were obliged to give way, and were hotly pursued a distance of nine miles. It was estimated that they left on the ground eighty men killed, and that their wounded, of whom several died subsequently, amounted at least to the same number. Several other battles, in which the French party always had the advantage, speedily followed ; and the Choctaws, being made cooler and wiser by such copious and repeated bleedings, began to discover that they were annihilating their own nation for the ultimate benefit of the English and of the French, who were goading them on with mutual emulation and satisfaction. Their wise men held several councils, and it was at last determined to make away with Red Shoe, who was the chief obstacle to the restoration of peace. In consequence of this determination, this celebrated warrior was killed, as he was returning to his village with a convoy of English merchandise. This blow might have proved effective, if the goods and their English owners had also been destroyed with Red Shoe ; but such was not the case, and the English, availing themselves of the means they had on hand to bribe the Indians, gathered a goodly number of partisans, at the head of whom they placed a brother of Red Shoe ; and succeeded in thus keeping up the civil war. The French establishments were again attacked, and some persons were killed. The English took advantage of the renewal of hostilities to give more extension to their commerce. But Grand-Pré, who commanded at Tombecbee, having been informed that five English traders were preparing to depart from some of the Chickasaw villages, with sixty horses loaded with furs, posted himself in ambuscade with thirteen friendly Indians, and attacked the English, whom he completely defeated.



One of them was killed, but the rest escaped, leaving all the horses of the convoy, with their rich loads, in the hands of Grand-Pré.

Whilst the French were obtaining these advantages on the Choctaw territory, they were exposed to great danger among the Illinois, who had been gained over by the English, and who had resolved to rise upon the French. Fortunately, the conspiracy was discovered in time; and the Chevalier de Berthel, who commanded in that district, acted with an energy which put a stop to the intended hostilities of the Indians. The Marquis of Vaudreuil, in transmitting to his government an account of all these disturbances among the Indians, said that they were to be attributed to the contempt which the red nations had conceived for the French, from seeing the smallness of their forces at their different settlements, and to the belief which had been impressed upon them by the English, that the King of France had no more ships to transport his warriors to Louisiana.

From this cause, or from another, the audacity of the Indians was daily on the increase. Some Frenchmen, who had gone in pursuit of game in the vicinity of New Orleans, were killed by some of those red marauders, and the Mobile settlement was thrown into such a state of alarm, that the Marquis of Vaudreuil thought it requisite to quiet those apprehensions by his presence, and paid a visit to that place. Whilst at Mobile, he caused every house to be fortified with palisades, and stationed all the neighboring small nations on the avenues to the town, to guard it against surprise.

It was during the absence of Vaudreuil, that the sportsmen of whom I have spoken were murdered near New Orleans. Noyan, whom Vaudreuil had left in command during his absence, sent fifty men, one half of the line

and the other half of the militia, to scour the country in search of the marauders. This detachment, commanded by Tixerant, met a party of Choctaw hunters, whom the French took to be the enemy they were looking after, and two men were sent to reconnoitre. But they were discovered by three Choctaws who were on the watch, and who uttered their customary shrieks to give warning to the rest of their party. The two Frenchmen took immediately to their heels, and, having joined their countrymen, communicated to them the panic with which they had been seized. The whole detachment retreated in haste, and did not think themselves safe, until they had put a bayou between them and what they supposed to be the enemy. Not satisfied with this natural protection, they set to work to fortify themselves. When the Indians saw the French retreat in a manner which resembled a flight, they, in the excitement of the moment, fired a few shots, which killed one soldier and wounded two. But the French and the Indians having come to a parley, the chief of the Indians apologized for what had taken place, and affirmed that the shots had been fired, not by his men, but by some runaway negroes whom he offered to deliver up to the French. Thus ended this affray; but the Marquis of Vaudreuil, having heard of it, was highly incensed at the want of firmness exhibited by the French. He complained bitterly to his government of the conduct of Tixerant, their commander, whom he called a drunkard; and this officer was ignominiously dismissed from the army.

At no time since its foundation had the colony been more harassed by the incursions of the Indians. Those attacks followed close on the heels of each other, and left little breathing time to the colonists. Thus, a short time after the happening of the events which I have related,

a party of Indians, making their appearance on the plantation of a man called Cheval, at the German Coast, seized the arms of a number of Frenchmen and blacks who were working in the fields, and who, finding themselves destitute of all means of defence, fled to their boats and crossed the Mississippi, with the exception of two white men, named Bouchereau and Rousseau, who remained with two negroes, and who had the hardihood to attempt to drive the Indians out of a house which they were plundering. The two Frenchmen were soon killed, and the Indians sallied out to scalp them, but the two negroes fought so stoutly for the protection of the bodies of their masters, that they killed two Indians and drove the rest back into the house. The negroes clung to the battle-field, near the corpses, which, with touching fidelity, they were loath to abandon, until one of them was killed by a shot from the house, and the other had received several flesh wounds. It was only then that this brave man thought of retreat, and slowly moving towards the river, he plunged into the turbid stream. In spite of the loss of blood, he had swum more than half way across the Mississippi, when he was picked up by a boat.

The Indians, having no further resistance to overcome, issued out of their stronghold, and were going from one plantation to another in search of plunder, when they met a well known dancing master of New Orleans, named Baby. He was hyperbolically tall, thin and sallow; his sunken cheeks almost kissed each other under the arch of his curved nose, and his small twinkling grey eyes, under their shaggy and bushy brows, looked out with a melancholy expression, and squinted right and left, in an opposite direction to each other, as if they were both, each on its own account, anxiously in search of the lost

substance belonging to the body of which they formed a part. The eccentricities of Baby's mind, as well as those of his physical organization, had made him famous in the colony, and the doleful mien with which he used to give his lessons, had gained him the appellation of the *Don Quixote of dancing*. Baby, when spied by the Indians, was mounted on a small creole donkey, as lean and uncouth as himself, and on which he held himself up as majestically erect as if he stood ready to dance the court minuet; his head was protected against the rays of the sun by a grey beaver as large as an umbrella; the heels of his long legs, armed with seven inch Mexican rowels, were almost sweeping the ground, so that it seemed as if both man and beast were walking together, and it was doubtful which one carried the other, if carrying there was. The Indians, who are not prone to laughter, were, however, moved to it by this strange apparition, and resolved to take alive the quadruped and the biped. With eager competition and with deafening shouts they rushed upon poor Baby, under the impression that he would be an easy prey, but they were soon undeceived. Baby had no other weapon than a hunting knife, but his long arm brandished it with so fearful a rapidity of action, his long and muscular legs gave such kicks, his elongated dagger-like spurs made such gashes, and his crane-like throat emitted such a variety of unearthly sounds, that the Indians shrank back in astonishment and affright, and Baby had time to take refuge, with his faithful donkey, in a house in which a young man, named Guillaume, had barricaded himself, with ten or twelve black boys and girls whom he had gathered together, and who had been forgotten when the white and black population had fled across the river. The house was strongly built, and Guillaume and Baby, al-

though they had but one gun and little ammunition, defended themselves with such effect against the attacks of the Indians, that they drove them away, after having wounded one of them dangerously. But Baby received in the neck a mortal wound, of which he died, the next day, in the Charity Hospital of New Orleans, whither he had been transported.

De Vaudreuil, on being informed of this attack, sent immediately several detachments of regulars, militia, and friendly Indians, in all the directions which the retreating enemy was likely to take. The French met the Choctaws on the Bayou St. John, where a sharp encounter took place. All the booty, ammunition, provisions, boats and prisoners of the Indians fell into the possession of the French; and two only of these marauders, who dashed into the swamps and were lost sight of, could make their escape. "This is," writes the Marquis of Vaudreuil, with some degree of contempt, "what has caused so much alarm! If the inhabitants of the German Settlement and those of New Orleans were to be believed, that troop of Indians was composed of two hundred of the most intrepid of the Choctaw warriors. But I have always thought that there were, at most, no more than from twelve to fifteen vagabonds, who, knowing the timidity of the Germans, had come to steal some of their negroes with the intention of selling them to the English."

The Marquis went on saying that a black woman, who had been made prisoner by these Indians, informed him that they were thirteen in number, as he had always presumed; and he complained of the want of energy showed by the Chevalier D'Arensbourg, who commanded at the German Coast, and who, with a force of one hundred and twenty to one hundred and thirty men

whom he had under his orders, could not act in time to check the depredations of a handful of Indians, or intercept their flight. Thus closed the year 1748. It proved a very unquiet and onerous one to the colony, the expenses of which amounted to 539,265 livres.

On the 2d of January, 1749, Maurepas, who was then at the head of the government in France, framed some instructions relative to the commerce of the colony, and addressed them to the Marquis of Vaudreuil, and to Michel de la Rouvillière, who had succeeded Lenormant as Intendant Commissary. "I request you," wrote the minister, "to prevent, with great care, the carrying on between Louisiana and the English colonies of any contraband trade, which may enable the colonists, to the detriment of the King's interests, to sell their indigo to the English, and to receive in return other merchandise, negroes or money. Let it be your special duty to prevent this; and it requires the more care and attention on your part, from the fact that English smugglers have for some time past found their way into the colony. I have even been informed that ships have been fitted out in Louisiana for Carolina. Should there be no end put to this state of things, the taste for this fraudulent trade would strike deep roots in the colony. The will of the King is, that you should strictly prohibit all trading between Louisiana and the English. You must not, under any pretext, receive in the colony any of their ships, and those that attempt to penetrate into any of her ports must be confiscated. In a word, you must neither tolerate, nor allow to go on without punishment, any kind of trading with the English, and his majesty would admit of no excuse on your part. This applies also to trading with the Dutch."

It is evident that this system was not calculated to

relieve the distresses and the necessities of the colony, nor to promote its commercial prosperity. In our days, on the exuberantly fertile soil of Louisiana, teeming with every sort of produce, in her noble city of New Orleans, that Cybele of the western waters, rising in pride with her shining crescent of ships, if not with her tiara of towers, *commerce is king*, but a king who began with being the veriest of slaves. May, for the benefit of all nations, the shattered fetters forever remain at the feet of the enfranchised sovereign, and may the trident of Neptune be for ever the sceptre of peace, extended throughout the world over the elements of discord!

If the government acted with short-sighted illiberality with regard to commerce, it seemed disposed to show more favor to the agricultural interest; and, in order to give more extension to the production of wax from the Candleberry tree (*Cyrea myrifica*), it authorized the Marquis of Vaudreuil to purchase the whole crop of this kind of wax, for the account of the king, at the rate of ten to twelve livres a pound.

During the year 1749, no change happened for the better in the affairs of the colony, which continued to suffer greatly from the hostilities of the Indians. The Marquis of Vaudreuil, in a despatch of the 22d of September, speaks of incessant attacks made by the several Indian nations throughout the extensive territory of the colony, and describes the general alarm which existed from Natchez to New Orleans. "To destroy entirely the Indians," said he, "there could be nothing so effective as a force composed of the creoles of the country. They alone are able to scour the woods, and to make war after the fashion of these barbarians. But unfortunately there is not a sufficient number of them."

The year 1750 brought some relief to the colony.



The struggle which had continued so long among the Indians, between the partisans of the French and those of the English, seemed to be drawing to a close, and the ascendancy of the French had prevailed. Of the thirty-two Choctaw villages then occupied by that nation, only two remained in the possession of the English party, and even in these two villages some of the warriors were wavering, and disposed to abandon their chiefs to make peace on their own account. The English party, however, showed a great deal of energy, and in the beginning of June, in a desperate fight in which they engaged, they lost one hundred and thirty scalps. This was a crushing blow; and one still more effectual was struck, in September, by Grand-Pré, who, at the head of a party of the Choctaws attached to the French, entirely subdued the English party, and forced them to sue for peace, which was granted to them on the following conditions:—1st. That capital punishment should be inflicted on any Choctaw, be he a chief or a common warrior, who should kill a Frenchman; and that, if the friends or kinsmen of that chief or warrior should oppose the infliction of the penalty, then that the whole nation should take up arms, and make these men share the fate of the culprit they had attempted to protect. 2d. That death should be the penalty incurred by any Choctaw, be he a chief or a common warrior, who should introduce an Englishman into his village; and that revenge for his death should never be sought by any one of the nation; and further, that the Englishman thus introduced be put to death. 3d. That the whole Choctaw nation should continue to make war upon the Chickasaws, and should never cease to strike at that *perfidious race* (so called in the language of the treaty) as long as there should be any portion of it remaining. 4th. That in the villages



of the *rebels* (as were designated the Choctaws of the English party), all the forts should be destroyed as speedily as possible, and that, on both sides, the prisoners and the slaves taken during the war should be restored. This was called the "*Grand-Pré Treaty*," and was intended as a curb and a bridle sufficiently strong to manage the Choctaws for the future.

Thus tranquillity was at last re-established in the colony. A detachment of troops was stationed at the German Coast, and another at the Tunicas, where, at the request of that nation, a fort was built by the French. Those Indians had long since prayed for the construction of a fort, to protect their women and children when their warriors were gone on war expeditions. With regard to the Chickasaws, they also, exhausted by their long struggle against the French and Choctaws, had sued for peace; and in token of their desire to bury the hatchet of war, and as the interpreter of their sentiments, they had sent to the Marquis of Vaudreuil a French woman and some children, whom they had, in the course of the preceding year, made prisoners at the Arkansas. The Marquis answered that he would take their petition into consideration, but that if they wished to obtain peace, it was necessary that they should behave better than they had done so far. The truth is that the French wanted no peace with the Chickasaws, who had been their implacable enemies since the foundation of the colony, and that they had resolved on their entire destruction. With them, for the accomplishment of this purpose, it was merely a question of time. On this subject, De Vaudreuil wrote to his government: "With regard to the Chickasaws, we must wait patiently, and postpone all action until we are able to undertake another expedition against

them. From the unsuccessful expeditions which took place from 1736 to 1740, the Indians have drawn the inference that we are not able to destroy or to subdue the red men. Until we have returned full retaliation for the failure of our past operations, and until the impression produced by that failure be entirely wiped off, we shall always be in an extremely critical situation."

It will be remembered that, in 1747, the Intendant Commissary, Lenormant, had opposed a new emission of paper money; but his successor, Michel de la Rouvillière, pursued a very different course. The expenses of the colony had greatly increased; its scanty resources had diminished; and with almost a total absence of help from the mother country, it was very difficult for De Vaudreuil and Michel de la Rouvillière to carry on the colonial government. To relieve their necessities, and perhaps also to gratify the wishes of many, who looked with delight at the prospect ever offered to the greedy by the manufacturing and throwing in the market of a quantity of paper money, these two high functionaries issued a joint ordinance creating notes of twenty to thirty livres, and of greater value if necessary. These notes were to be given in payment of all the King's expenses and debts, and to be exchanged for all other papers, obligations, and bonds, so that they should speedily become the only currency of the colony.

The French government received with astonishment the news that such a measure had been adopted, and expressed its disapprobation of it in very explicit terms. De Vaudreuil and Michel de la Rouvillière were energetically censured for having exercised a power which had never been delegated to them; they were ordered to withdraw all the paper they had issued, and to exchange these obligations for drafts on the treasurers-

general of the Crown in France. The ministerial despatch on this subject contained these words: "The experiment which was made in Louisiana as to paper currency ought to inspire great circumspection in so delicate a matter, and it cannot be doubted but that the Governor's recent ordinance would soon produce the same disorders which were formerly the result of measures of the same kind." Such was the view taken of the subject by the French government, and De Vaudreuil and Michel de la Rouvillière were plainly told that their conduct, on that occasion, was without a shadow of excuse.

If the Marquis of Vaudreuil had the mortification of incurring the displeasure of his government in this particular act of his administration, he had the satisfaction, on the other hand, of succeeding, at last, in the application which he had made, during so many years, for the increase of the military forces of the colony. The King decreed that, for the future, there should be kept up in the colony thirty-seven companies of fifty men each, exclusive of officers. It was also decreed that the Governor could discharge, annually, two soldiers from each company, on condition that they should settle in the colony; and that, to all persons coming to establish themselves in Louisiana, there should be granted a supply of corn and rice for eighteen months, with the necessary implements to improve the lands that would be conceded to them. By the same royal ordinance, to mechanics settling in cities a supply of provisions for six months was allowed, with the instruments required for their trade. But the Governor was instructed to take special care that the liberality of the King should not be turned to improper and unprofitable uses; that the lands conceded should lie close to each other, and be

well selected; and that the formation of villages be encouraged.

On the 12th of October, Livaudais, the chief pilot and harbor-master, made an interesting report on the mouth of the Mississippi. The attention of the French government had always been fixed on this important subject, on which, from time to time, all the information which could be collected from careful observation was solicited, and filed in the archives of France.\*

Towards the close of the year (1750), the colony was thrown into a state of excitement by the discovery that a great deal of the paper currency of the country was counterfeited, and therefore entirely valueless. It gave rise to strict investigations, and a colored man, named Joseph, was tried and convicted as one of the perpetrators of this crime. He was sentenced to be whipped by the public executioner, to have the mark of the flower-de-luce branded on his shoulder with hot iron, and to be transported for sale to one of the French West India islands.

On the 12th of January, 1751, the Marquis of Vaudreuil wrote to his government to obtain the Cross of St. Louis for De Grand-Pré, as a reward for all the services which this distinguished officer had rendered in the wars with the Indians. The name of Grand-Pré, so well known in the oldest annals of chivalry, awakens stirring recollections of the past, and recalls to the mind the enlivening associations of history and poetry. What says Shakspeare (King Henry V.) ?

*Messenger.*—My Lord High Constable, the English lie within fifteen hundred paces of your tent.

*High Constable of France.*—Who hath measured the ground ?

*Messenger.*—The Lord Grand-Pré.

*High Constable.*—A vallant and most expert gentleman. Would it were

\*See the Appendix.

day! Alas! poor Harry of England! he longs not for the dawning as we do!"

The Grand-Prés of Louisiana descend from Pierre Boucher, who was Governor of Trois Rivières in Canada in 1653, and who published an interesting work on that country, then generally named New France. The title of the work is:—"Histoire naturelle et véritable des mœurs et productions du pays de la Nouvelle France, vulgairement dite le Canada."

Of the most remarkable men whose deeds will have to be recorded, when the history of Canada shall be written as it deserves to be, Pierre Boucher is to be ranked among the first. The study of his character shows a mixture, delightful to contemplate, of Spartan heroism and of Christian meekness, of the fiery enthusiasm of the knight and the ardent faith of the martyr, of womanly tenderness, unshaken fortitude, worldly shrewdness and almost virgin artlessness, combined with a turn of mind productive of the energetic virtues of the feudal times—a baron and a saint—a man of aristocratic conceptions and bearing, with the utmost liberality of disposition, and the watchfulness of a sister of charity for destitution, sickness and affliction. De Muys, who was appointed Governor of Louisiana in 1707, and who died in Havana on his way to that French colony, was his son-in-law. Pierre Boucher left a large family which divided itself into two branches. One of them, the Grand-Prés, has taken root in Louisiana, and the other, under the name of Boucherville, flourishes to this day in high social condition in Canada.

On the 18th of February, the Marquis of Vaudreuil and Michel de la Rouvillière published regulations of police, which, as forcible illustrations of the administra-

tion of the colony, and of the manners, ideas, customs and morals then prevailing, are given in the appendix to this work. These regulations are also an evidence of the legislation which was, at that time, thought most appropriate to the state of the country. Hard labor for life, on the King's galleys, was inflicted for offences which, in our days, would hardly be visited with the penalty of a few hours' imprisonment.

There is no doubt that Louisiana, under the arbitrary legislation of the despotic government of France, was frequently a sort of state prison or Bastile, to which were sent the victims of those orders of arrest, so well known under the name of *Lettres de Cachet*. In connexion with the exercise of this kind of authority, there is a curious despatch of the Marquis of Vaudreuil, dated on the 15th of May, 1751, in which he writes to the Minister in France: "The situation of the Lady of Ste. Hermine, who came to this colony, thirty years since, by virtue of a *Lettre de Cachet*, obliges me to represent to you that this lady is at present unable to maintain herself here any longer, on account of the extreme destitution to which she is reduced by the death of Mr. de Loubois, with whom she had always lived. I beg permission to send her back, gratis, to France, in one of the King's ships. Moreover, the *Lettre de Cachet* has expired, and the lady is very old." Under these cold lines there lies perhaps a tale of deep woe and passion; and who knows how many such have passed by, unnoticed, on the far distant banks of the Mississippi, and in the discreet solitude of the boundless domains of the Father of Rivers!

During the year 1751, the colony found itself in a better state of protection than it had ever been. This evidently proves the power of the Marquis at court; for

more had been done for him than for any of his predecessors. His salary was greater than that of any of the preceding governors; and he had under his orders two thousand regulars—a larger force than had ever been seen in Louisiana. The distribution of these troops throughout the colony, was as follows:

District of New Orleans,	900	French,	75	Swiss,	. 975
" Mobile,	400	"	75	"	. 475
" Illinois,	.	.	.	.	. 300
" Arkansas,	.	.	.	.	. 50
" Natchez,	.	.	.	.	. 50
" Natchitoches,	.	.	.	.	. 50
" Pointe Coupée,	.	.	.	.	. 50
" German Coast,	.	.	.	.	. 50
Total,	.	.	.	.	. 2000

This increase of troops and expenses was received as a demonstration that the French government intended to push on the work of colonization with more energy than it had previously done, and with the expectation of better results. But it was soon discovered that it was a mere transient effort; that it had not originated in any deep laid and settled plan, or any firm resolve in a persevering course of action; and that it was, either the offspring of accidental and ephemeral determination from those in power, or of personal considerations and favoritism. Whatever may have been the cause of this unusual grant of protection to Louisiana, the events which followed in a few years, prove it to have been one of those fitful, apparent revivals of strength and health, which frequently precede the last agonies of death.

Governor Vaudreuil and the Intendant-Commissary Lenormant had quarrelled, according to the good old custom prevailing in the colony since its foundation and although the Marquis and Michel de la Rouvillière

the successor of Lenormant, had, at first, been on good terms, and had agreed on the issuing of paper money, which measure the French government had disapproved, they soon disagreed on every other act of administration. Hence followed, as usual, bickerings, recriminations and mutual accusations, which disturbed the colony. These two high functionaries soon became more intent upon counteracting each other, than upon devising plans for the benefit of the colony; and the opposition which they made to each other cramped and impeded the operations of their respective departments. On the 15th of May, 1751, Michel de la Rouvillière wrote to the French government:

“At the English Turn, Mr. de Vaudreuil has stationed the Ensign Duplessy, who is a raw recruit, without either capacity or experience. This officer, being drunk, ill-treated the store-keeper Carrière. But the Governor sided with the officer; for, who says *officer* says *all*. When the word *officer* is uttered, the world must *quake*. Hence, when one of those gentlemen has any misunderstanding with a private citizen, he never fails to exclaim: ‘Are you aware that you are speaking to an officer?’ And if, by chance, the affair comes before me, the defence of the officer against whom the complaint is brought, may be summed up in these words, which he utters in a tone of astonishment: ‘What! Sir! he dares thus speak to, or thus act toward an officer!’ and although the officer may be in the wrong, judgment is always given against his adversary, because the military influence is predominant in the Council, through the Governor, the Major, and the Governor’s flatterers.

“No justice is to be expected from Mr. De Vaudreuil; he is too lazy, too negligent; his wife is too malicious, too passionate, and has too strong interests in all the



settlements, and in the town of New Orleans, not to prevail upon him to keep on fair, and even on servile terms, with the body of officers, and with others.

“He was to destroy the abuses which sprung into existence during the sway of the India Company, but he has carefully abstained from doing so. Those abuses are too flattering to his vanity, since he is the absolute master of every thing, and they are too favorable to his interests to be eradicated. The army and the old members of the council find their advantage in this state of things, since they vex the public with impunity, as they have always done, through the protection they obtain from the Governor by their servile courting of that functionary.”

The Marquis of Vaudreuil, in his turn, did not, in his despatches, treat the Intendant Commissary Michel de la Rouvillière with more lenity. In a communication of the 20th of July, he complained that the Commissary did not furnish the several military posts in the colony with the supplies of which they stood in need, and that it produced the worst effects on the troops and provoked desertion. He said that the Choctaws were impatient at not receiving their customary presents; that this delay was much to be regretted, and might have the most fatal consequences; that he was even aware that they had had some conferences with the English, and that Michel de la Rouvillière was only intent on gratifying his self-love and his taste for despotism. On the very same day, Michel de la Rouvillière was also scribbling away denunciations against De Vaudreuil. He complained of the manner in which the King's merchandise was wasted, and declared that De Vaudreuil distributed it capriciously to his favorites at the different stations where they commanded, and that the Choctaws,

through bad management, were a source of enormous expense to the government.

"There is no question," says he to the Minister, "but that the Governor is interested, for one-third, in the profits made at the post of Tombecbee, where De Grand-Pré commands, and that he has the same interests in all the other posts. Nobody doubts it here. Lenormant, my predecessor, must have proved it to you in his memorials, and informed you that Mr. De Vaudreuil had gone security for the commanders at their respective posts, and for the traders who had taken on lease the privilege of trafficking with Indians. The Marquis is too proud to have thus behaved, if he had not been prompted to it by self-interest. The commanders at the posts are all Canadians, who are his creatures, or who are kinsmen or relations of his own or of his wife.

"Mr. de Pontalba, the only one who does not belong to this gang, holds the government of Pointe Coupée, solely because he shares his profits with the Governor's lady. I have it from his own mouth, and, surely, he will not be called upon to draw lots with his brother officers, when the time shall come for the distribution of the troops which are to garrison our posts. There will be some pretext found to keep him where he is, and as specious a one will no doubt be discovered in favor of Mr. de Grand-Pré, who commands at Tombecbee, and who will not cast lots. In the meantime, the command of the English Turn has been withheld from Mr. de la Houssaye, who has given himself a great deal of trouble for the welfare of the new settlers at that point. As usual, *flour* was lately sent to Tombecbee for the garrison; but it was *sold, also as usual*, and *corn* was given for food to the soldiers, of whom eight have deserted.

"Mr. Delino, an ensign, who is a kinsman of Mr. de

Vaudreuil's and who commands at the Arkansas, having heard that new troops had arrived, and that the officers of the colony were to cast lots for the distribution of the several posts among them, and being anxious to make sure of his own, which is one of the best in the colony, abandoned it without permission, leaving a corporal in command. He arrived here to the great astonishment of everybody. Mr. de Vaudreuil, who felt the consequence of such an act of insubordination, sent him back within forty-eight hours, but inflicted no punishment. On his return to the Arkansas, Mr. Delino found that the corporal and the rest of the garrison had swept everything clean and had deserted, carrying away all that could be carried. Such are the causes which increase the expenses beyond the Intendant Commissary's control.

"There is no discipline; the most indulgent toleration is granted to the soldiers, provided they drink their money at the licensed liquor shop, (cantine,) where they are given drugs which ruin their health; for several months, there has never been less than a hundred of them at the hospital.

"There are here at least sixty officers, who hardly do duty once in fifty days. Not one of them is required to visit the barracks, which are kept in the most filthy and disgusting manner; the soldiers are allowed to do what they please, provided they drink at the liquor shop designated to them; and they carry out of it wine and spirits, which they re-sell to the negroes and to the Indians. This has been proved ten times for one; everybody knows it, and yet the abuse is not stopped. I frequently spoke to Mr. de Vaudreuil on this subject. But this nefarious practice, instead of being checked, has grown more active. It is Mr. de Belleisle, the aid-

major, who has the lease and administration of the liquor shop, and who gives for it a certain sum to the Major—others say to the Governor's lady. What is positive is, that Mr. de Vaudreuil has drawn upon the treasury for ten thousand livres of his salary as Governor, which he has given to Mr. de Belleisle, and it is with these funds that the supplies of the liquor shop have been bought.

“Moreover, Madam de Vaudreuil is capable of carrying on a still baser kind of trade. She deals here with everybody, and she forces merchants and other individuals to take charge of her merchandise, and to sell it at the price which she fixes. She keeps in her own house every sort of drugs, which are sold by her steward, and, in his absence, she does not scruple to descend, herself, to the occupation of measurement, and to betake herself to the ell. The husband is not ignorant of this. He draws from it a handsome revenue, to obtain which is his sole wish and aim.

“The first use which has been made of your Excellency's order to put a cadet in each company, was to bestow these favors on new-born children. There are some, between fifteen months and six years old, who come in for the distribution of provisions.”

Michel de la Rouvillière enters into further details, as to the abusive acts of authority committed by the officers, and complains of the boundless power which they possess, through the protection of the Marquis of Vaudreuil and of the Council, wherefore many inhabitants are obliged to leave the colony, to avoid vexations. He complains, also, of the bad conduct of the Attorney-General Fleuriau, whom he accuses of presumption, ignorance and passion. But, from the tone of his letters, it cannot be inferred that he, himself, who

reproaches Fleuriau for his passionate disposition, was free from a similar fault. His breast certainly does not seem to overflow with the milk of human kindness towards his brothers in authority, at whom he bites with the bitterest tooth of scurrility. If half of what he says be true, the colony must have been in a truly deplorable moral condition; for there prevailed in it the most shameful venality, and the stream of corruption originated in and ran down from the upper regions of society. It must have been a miniature copy of what was then going on in France. These low, but graphic details which have been given here, will not I hope, be deemed unworthy of being known, for they are the best illustrations of manners; nor is it to be forgotten that history, being the embodiment of human nature in its past actions and feelings, is to be studied with more effect in the unguarded privacies of her bed-chamber, than in her stately halls of reception, where she appears only in her robes of dignity.

In 1732, a royal ordinance had exempted from the payment of duty, during ten years, all the merchandise and goods imported from France into the colony, and also the productions of the colony exported to France. In 1741, this ordinance had been renewed for ten years; and now, on the 30th of November, 1751, it was made known that the same privilege should continue in force until 1762. This was persevering in the right path; but the adoption of one liberal measure was not sufficient to establish the prosperity of the colony on a solid basis;—it would have been necessary to co-ordinate, or to link together, a whole enlightened system of colonization, and to have put it into operation with steadiness, honesty and ability.

It was in this year, 1751, that two ships, which were

transporting two hundred regulars to Louisiana, stopped at Hispaniola. The Jesuits of that island obtained permission to put on board of those ships, and to send to the Jesuits of Louisiana, some sugar canes, and some negroes who were used to the cultivation of this plant. The canes were put under ground, according to the directions given, on the plantation of the reverend fathers, which was immediately above Canal street, on a portion of the space now occupied by the Second Municipality of the city of New Orleans. But it seems that the experiment proved abortive, and it was only in 1795 that the cultivation of the cane, and the manufacturing of sugar, was successfully introduced in Louisiana, and demonstrated to be practicable. It was then that this precious reed was really naturalized in the colony, and began to be a source of evergrowing wealth.

On board of the same ships there came sixty girls, who were transported to Louisiana at the expense of the King. It was the last emigration of the kind. These girls were married to such soldiers as had distinguished themselves for their good conduct, and who, in consideration of their marriage, were discharged from service. Concessions of land were made to each happy pair, with one cow and its calf, one cock and five hens, one gun, one axe, and one spade. During the first three years of their settlement, they were to receive rations of provisions, and a small quantity of powder, shot, grains and seeds of all sorts.

Such is the humble origin of many of our most respectable and wealthy families, and well may they be proud of a social position which is due to the honest industry and hereditary virtues of several generations, whilst some of patrician extraction, crushed under the weight of vices, or made inert by sloth, or labor-contemning

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pride, and degenerating from pure gold into vile dross, have been swept away, and have sunk into the dregs and sewers of the commonwealth. Thus in Louisiana, the high and the low, although the country has never suffered from any political or civil convulsions, seem to have, in the course of one century, frequently exchanged with one another their respective positions, much to the philosopher's edification.

In 1752, the Chickasaws having renewed their depredations at the instigation of the English, the Marquis of Vaudreuil put himself at the head of seven hundred regulars, and a large number of Indians, with whom he marched against the enemy. But this expedition was not more successful than those undertaken by Bienville. The Chickasaws shut themselves up in some forts which the English had helped them to construct, and which proved impregnable. Contenting himself with setting on fire some deserted villages, and destroying the crops and the cattle of the Chickasaws, the Marquis returned to New Orleans, after having considerably increased the fortifications at Tombechee, where he left a stronger garrison.

During this year, 1752, a Choctaw, happening to quarrel with a Colapissa, told him that he and all his tribe were no better than the fawning and mean-spirited dogs of the French. Whereupon, the Colapissa, resenting the insult, shot the Choctaw, and fled to New Orleans. The family of the dead claimed the fugitive, to have capital punishment inflicted upon him. The Marquis attempted in vain to persuade the Choctaws to receive presents in exchange for the blood they demanded, and found himself constrained to order that the fugitive be arrested. But nowhere could he be discovered. Whilst the search for him was on foot, his father went to the Choctaws,



and offered to die for his son. His proposition was accepted, and his head, shattered by one blow of the revengeful tomahawk, redeemed the life for which he had so willingly forfeited his own. This event became the subject of a tragedy, composed by an officer named Leblanc de Villeneuve. It was one of the first literary productions of the colony.

On the 23d of September, the Intendant Commissary, Michel de la Rouvillière, made a favorable report on the state of agriculture in Louisiana. "The cultivation of the wax tree," says he, "has succeeded admirably. Mr. Dubreuil alone, has made six thousand pounds of wax. Others have obtained as handsome results, in proportion to their forces; some went to the sea-shore, where the wax tree grows wild, in order to use it in its natural state. It is the only luminary used here by the inhabitants, and it is exported to other parts of America and to France. We stand in need of tillers of the ground, and of negroes. The colony prospers rapidly from its own impulse, and requires only gentle stimulation. In the last three years, forty-five brick houses were erected in New Orleans, and several fine new plantations were established."

A short time after writing this despatch, Michel de la Rouvillière died, and was succeeded by d'Auberville. Under the administration of the Marquis of Vaudreuil, the expenses of the colony kept steadily increasing, and amounted, for the year 1752, to 930,767 livres.

On the 9th of February, 1753, Kerlerec took possession of the government of Louisiana, the Marquis of Vaudreuil having been appointed Governor of Canada, where he distinguished himself, in 1756, by the skill and courage with which he resisted the invasion of the English.



The administration of the Marquis of Vaudreuil was long and fondly remembered in Louisiana, as an epoch of unusual brilliancy, but which was followed up by corresponding gloom. His administration, if small things may be compared with great ones, was for Louisiana, with regard to splendor, luxury, military display, and expenses of every kind, what the reign of Louis XIV. had been for France. He was a man of patrician birth and high breeding, who liked to live in a manner worthy of his rank. Remarkable for his personal graces and comeliness, for the dignity of his bearing and the fascination of his address, he was fond of pomp, show and pleasure; surrounded by a host of brilliant officers, of whom he was the idol, he loved to keep up a miniature court, in distant imitation of that of Versailles; and long after he had departed, old people were fond of talking of the exquisitely refined manners, the magnificent balls, the splendidly uniformed troops, the high-born young officers, and many other unparalleled things they had seen in the days of the *Great Marquis*.

## SECOND LECTURE.

ARRIVAL OF GOVERNOR KERLEREC—HE SHOWS HIMSELF FAVORABLE TO THE INDIANS—HIS DEALING WITH THEM—HIS OPINION OF THE INHABITANTS OF LOUISIANA—HIS DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY—HIS OPINION OF THE FRENCH AND SWISS TROOPS—REDUCTION OF THE FORCES AND OF THE EXPENSES OF THE COLONY—ARRIVAL OF SOME EMIGRANTS FROM LORRAINE—APPREHENSIONS OF AN ATTACK FROM THE ENGLISH—CRUELTY OF THE FRENCH COMMANDER AT CAT ISLAND—HE IS MURDERED BY HIS SOLDIERS—MANNER IN WHICH THEY ARE PUNISHED—HARD FATE OF BAUDROT—DEFENSIVE PREPARATIONS AGAINST THE ENGLISH—CURIOUS FACT AS TO BALIZE ISLAND—REVULSION OF KERLEREC'S SENTIMENTS IN RELATION TO THE INDIANS—HEAVY EXPENSES OF THE FRENCH ADMINISTRATION IN LOUISIANA—WARFARE BETWEEN THE CAPUCHINS AND JESUITS—THE ENGLISH CUT OFF ALL COMMUNICATION BETWEEN FRANCE AND LOUISIANA—DEFENCELESS STATE OF THE COLONY—MILITARY POWER OF THE CHOCTAWS AND ALIBAMONS IN 1758—ARRIVAL OF THE INTENDANT ROCHEMORE—PAPER MONEY OPERATIONS OF ROCHEMORE—HE IS BLAMED FOR THEM BY HIS GOVERNMENT—QUARRELS BETWEEN ROCHEMORE AND KERLEREC—ROCHEMORE IS DISMISSED FROM OFFICE AND HIS FRIENDS ARE EMBARKED FOR FRANCE—ATTEMPT TO MANUFACTURE SUGAR FROM THE CANE—NEW ORLEANS FORTIFIED WITH A DITCH AND A PALISADE—ARRIVAL OF FOUCAULT AS KING'S COMMISSARY—HIS DESCRIPTION OF THE COLONY—CESSION OF LOUISIANA TO SPAIN AND TO THE ENGLISH—PROTEST OF THE INDIANS AGAINST THE CESSION—KERLEREC IS RECALLED AND THROWN INTO THE BASTILLE—D'ABBADIE APPOINTED GOVERNOR—DESCRIPTION OF THE COLONY BY REDON DE RASSAC—THE ENGLISH TAKE POSSESSION OF MOBILE AND TOMBECBEE—BICKERINGS BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH—HOSTILITY OF THE INDIANS OF LOUISIANA TO THE ENGLISH—ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THE ENGLISH MAJOR LOFTUS AND THE INDIANS ON THE RIVER MISSISSIPPI—EXPULSION OF THE JESUITS FROM THE COLONY—D'ABBADIE'S DESCRIPTION OF THE COLONY—PETITION OF THE MERCHANTS OF NEW ORLEANS TO D'ABBADIE—HIS OPINION OF THAT PETITION—MONOPOLY OF PRINTING GRANTED TO BRAUD—LETTER OF LOUIS XV. TO D'ABBADIE ON THE TREATY OF CESSION.

KERLEREC, the successor of the Marquis of Vaudreuil, was a captain in the Royal Navy. He was a distinguished officer who had been in active service at sea twenty-five years, and who had been in four engagements,

in which he had displayed ability and courage, and had received several wounds. He reached the Balize on the 24th of January, 1753, New Orleans on the 3d of February, and was installed as Governor on the 9th of that month.

Kerlerec began his administration by showing himself very well disposed towards the Indians, in whose favor he seems to have imbibed very decided impressions on his arrival in Louisiana. On the 11th of June, he convened a court-martial, to take into consideration the representations made by the Choctaws on behalf of certain deserters who had been arrested by them and delivered up to the French, under the stipulations of a treaty, by which the Choctaws were bound to arrest all the French deserters, and the French, on the other side, had obligated themselves to pardon those that should be arrested and delivered up by the Choctaws. The Indians had faithfully complied with their part of the treaty; but the French seemed disposed to forget their obligations, and were detaining in prison, probably with the intention of proceeding to more rigorous means of punishment, three deserters who had been put in their possession under the treaty. The Indians had justly threatened to consider themselves as released from their obligation of arresting French deserters, if those that were in prison did not receive a full pardon. The court-martial, presided over by Kerlerec, decided in favor of the demand of the Indians, who were exceedingly gratified when Kerlerec gave them the official information of that fact, and assured them that, for the future, the rights of the Indians and of the French would be impartially weighed in the same scales.

On the 20th August, the new Governor wrote to his government: "I am satisfied with the Choctaws. It

seems to me that they are true to their plighted faith. But we must be the same in our transactions with them. They are men who reflect, and who have more logic and precision in their reasoning than it is commonly thought."

At a meeting of the Choctaw chiefs, Kerlerec reproached them, in a friendly tone, with their receiving English traders in their villages. He told them that, so long as they extended one hand to the French and the other to the English, they were to expect constant troubles, because they ought not to forget that the English were the originators of all the difficulties which had happened between the Choctaws and the French, and which had divided the Choctaws themselves into hostile parties. To these observations the Indians replied, with a good deal of sense and truth: "The original wrongs and faults are on the side of the French. They are the first of the white race whom we have known, and who have inspired us with new wants from which we cannot free ourselves, and for the satisfaction of which they are often but partially prepared, when not totally unprovided. The English study our tastes with more care than you do; they have a more diversified and a richer stock of merchandise. Hence are we driven to trade with them, when our hearts are with you. It is a matter of necessity, not of choice. Satisfy all our wants, and we shall, now and for ever, renounce the English."

Kerlerec admitted the strength of these observations, to which he called the attention of the French government, and took this circumstance as a theme for requesting a larger supply than usual of every sort of merchandise. He also convened the chiefs of the Arkansas, whom he feasted with great liberality, and whom he

dismissed much delighted with their reception at New Orleans, after having urged them to send, all along the Mississippi, for about forty leagues up and down, war expeditions against the Chickasaws, the Cherokees, and the Chaouannons.

With regard to the Chickasaws, although their numbers had been much curtailed, they were still very troublesome, and had lately killed all the men of a convoy destined for the Illinois district, sparing only one girl, ten years old, whom they carried away. Kerlerec betook himself to ransoming several prisoners who had long been among the Indians. For the ransom of every male adult the governor gave one hundred pounds weight of deer skin, and proportionately less for females and children.

Kerlerec also proceeded to make some mutations among the officers of the several posts. "I have recalled," says he, in one of his despatches, "Mr. de Pontalba, who had the command of Pointe Coupée, although he ought to have been kept there for the good of that locality; but I was obliged to give way under the pressure of the calumnies of a gang of intriguers, who had spread the rumor that Mr. de Pontalba would retain his post, because he had annually paid to the Governor a stipend of twelve thousand livres; and that the same influence would be brought to bear upon me with the same results. Before the departure of Mr. de Vaudreuil, a petition signed by forty of the most respectable inhabitants of Pointe Coupée had been presented to me, to retain Mr. de Pontalba in command. But I had to yield to malicious insinuations, and I must confess that this circumstance has filled me with grief, humiliation, contempt and disgust toward the people of this country."

The fact is that Kerlerec, in less than six months after his arrival, was beginning to see the tide of a sea of trouble and vexations rising fast upon him. Many of the officers were discontented, and the Capuchins, whom he seems to have offended, were using against him all their priestly influence.

The state of the colony itself was not such as to present a very gratifying spectacle to its Governor, and, in connection with this subject, Kerlerec wrote to his government: "The German Settlement has not recovered from the unfortunate blow which it received from the Indians, in or about the year 1748. The inhabitants of that post withdraw from it insensibly, and therefore their numbers diminish every day. To those who remain nothing can inspire a feeling of security, and they are so disgusted with their present position, that many of them have petitioned me for lands elsewhere, unless I grant them an increase of troops for their protection. They even desire that those troops be Swiss, on account of the sympathies and affinities which they have with the men of that nation, and because the Swiss, being disposed to hard working, will help them in their agricultural labors, and will marry and settle among them, much more than the French are likely to do. Another reason is, that the troops of our nation, on account of the horrid acts of which they are known to be capable, have inspired the German settlers, who have retained a proper sense of their worth and dignity, with a deep aversion to having with them any communication. I have sent to these Germans fifteen men of the Swiss company of Vélezand, and, for the reasons here given, I solicit an increase of the Swiss troops. The Swiss behave exceedingly well: it would be necessary to carry their number to three hundred. I would

prefer reducing the French troops and augmenting the Swiss; such is the superiority of the latter over the former!"

When reading the despatches of the governors of Louisiana for a series of fifty-four years, one is tempted to believe that the French Government used to select from the convicts in the King's jails the men who were sent as soldiers to Louisiana. Bienville complained of the disgrace and grief inflicted upon him by putting under his command certain specimens of humanity, whose dwarfish size did not exceed four feet and a half, whose stunted and crooked proportions offended the sight, and whose vices were only equalled by their cowardice. Périer blushed at the necessity of confessing, that his soldiers usually fled at the first flash of an Indian gun. He even said, in one of his despatches, that his troops were so wretchedly bad, that they seemed to have been picked purposely for the colony, and that it would be much better to trust negroes on the battle-field, and use them as soldiers, were they not too valuable property, because they, at least, were brave men. Now comes Kerlerec, who, pouring out the last and bitterest drop remaining in the vial of vituperation, informs his government that it would be more expedient to send him Swiss instead of French troops, on account of the decided superiority of the former, and because the apprehension of the horrid acts of which the French troops were known to be capable, had induced the colonists to wish to avoid the contaminating and dangerous contact of such villains. What had become, one is tempted to exclaim, of the soldiers of Turenne and of Condé? What had become of the chivalry that had threatened, under Louis XIV., to subdue the whole of Europe? What had become of the heroism that had

blazed uninterruptedly through so many centuries, and so freely spilt the noble blood of France in every part of the world, from the days when the sword of a Gaul weighed so heavily in the Roman scales at the foot of the Capitol, down to the recently fought battle of Fontenoy? The fields of Canada were soon destined to show that the French soldiers, under Montcalm and others, had undergone no degeneracy. But the stern impartiality of the historian makes it his duty to record these words, which were written by a French officer (Périer) when giving an account of a panic: "*I am grieved to see that there is less of the French temperament in Louisiana than anywhere else.*" It is a relief, however, to remark that every Governor, although applying the most withering expressions of contempt to the colonial French soldiers, who, generally, were commanded by officers of distinguished abilities and great intrepidity, seldom fails to pay a flattering homage to the courage of the French colonists and of the few Creoles or natives of Louisiana.

After the departure of Vaudreuil, the troops were reduced to thirteen hundred and fifty men. The rest of the forces of the colony was composed of four companies of militia and one company of land waiters (*gardes-côtes*), the whole amounting to about five hundred men. The object of this reduction was to diminish the expenses, which for this year, 1753, rose to 887,205 livres.

The colony had been advancing in age, without having gathered strength enough to cease to be tributary to the Indians; for at the beginning of the year 1754, Kerlerec wrote to his government: "I lack merchandise to trade with, and, particularly, to make to the Choctaws the customary presents which they expect, and of which three have now become due, without this debt having



been discharged. This is the cause of their addressing me vehement and even insolent reproaches. They threaten to call in the English."

This year, the population of the colony was slightly increased by the arrival of some families from Lorraine. They were located at the German settlement, which, as we have seen, was undergoing a gradual process of depopulation that was checked by this circumstance. They were industrious people, and proved a valuable acquisition.

The colony was, at this time, under great apprehension of being attacked by the English, and, on the 9th of July, Kerlerec wrote to his government in very strong language, to represent the utterly defenceless state of the colony, which was open on all sides and destitute of everything. "And yet," said Kerlerec, "the English are moving everywhere about us, and threaten to interrupt our communications with the Illinois."

From the fear of danger coming from abroad the attention of the colonists was diverted, for a time, by an event which filled them with horror, and the impression of which has been transmitted to us from generation to generation by the traditions of the fireside.

In Cat Island there was a small garrison commanded by an officer named Roux, or Duroux, who was extremely cruel and avaricious. He used to employ his men in making charcoal which he sold for his private benefit; and for the slightest offence, ordering them to strip stark naked, he had them tied to trees, in the midst of a swamp, and in the thickest of swarms of musquitoes. There he doomed them to endure the torments of a long night. The natural result ensued; the victims rose upon the tyrant, put him to death, fled to the mainland near Mobile, and, joining some English traders, endeavored to

reach Georgia across the Indian territories. But, at the bidding of the French, a party of Choctaws pursued the fugitives, and made them prisoners, with the exception of one, who destroyed himself. They were taken to New Orleans, where they were tried. Two were broken on the wheel, and one of them, who was a Swiss, was, in conformity, it is said, with the penal code observed by the Swiss in the service of France, placed in a coffin, and (*horresco referens*) sawed asunder right across the waist by two sergeants of the Swiss troops. In our days, it is more than doubtful, considering the provocation, whether these men would have been punished at all. So different are the judgments of man under the never-ceasing modifications produced by time !

The Indians, whose greediness and acuteness never lost an opportunity of obtaining some presents or indemnities from the French, pretended that their territory had been polluted by the suicide of the French soldier who had put an end to his life ; and they claimed a present as an atonement for the crime. It was the Alibamons who urged this pretension, and Kerlerec, who wished to conciliate them, acceded to their demand.

When Roux was murdered by the soldiers under his command, there was on Cat Island a man named Baudrot, who had been thrown into prison by Roux, for disobedience to one of his arbitrary and oppressive orders. Baudrot had frequently been employed by the successive governors of Louisiana, to negotiate with the Indian nations, and had always shown himself worthy of the trust reposed in him. He was held in high estimation by the Indians, of whose languages he had acquired a perfect knowledge, and he was well acquainted with their manners, their customs, their laws, and the geography of the territories which they claimed as their own. Wonders

were related of his physical strength, and had made him known far and wide. The Choctaws, in particular, had conceived such respect and friendship for him, that they had adopted him, and had granted him all the privileges possessed by one of their race. The soldiers of Roux, after having murdered their commander, forced Baudrot to act as their guide, to a certain distance through the territory of the Indians, and then sent him back with a certificate that he had yielded only to violence on their part. He was tried, however, and found guilty as accomplice to the flight of the soldiers. To the horror of all the inhabitants of Louisiana, with almost every one of whom he had become acquainted in the course of his travels and wanderings, and whose sympathies he had gained, he was broken on the wheel and his body, being denied Christian sepulture, was flung into the Mississippi, as if it had been the offensive carcase of the vilest animal. Such were the scenes acted in Louisiana in 1754! This barbarous deed struck with astonishment even the savages, and inspired them with an indignation which they did not fear loudly to express to Governor Kerlerec. The descendants of Baudrot are still in existence in Louisiana.

As already mentioned, the colony was under a lively sense of the danger of foreign invasion, and it became necessary to quiet the apprehensions of the inhabitants by defensive preparations. On the 20th of September, Kerlerec and the Intendant Commissary D'Auberville said, in a despatch to their government: "The land which is formed of alluvial deposits at the mouth of the Mississippi is so deficient in substance and solidity, that it is not possible, without considerable expenses, to establish thereon a settlement, or durable fortifications. The fortifications which the India Company had caused

to be erected there, and which were extensive, are destroyed. There are remaining but few vestiges of them, which are daily sinking into the mud, and are always under water when the tide rises, notwithstanding the repairs made to them in 1741 and 1742. It is important, however, to have at that locality a shelter for a small garrison, for pilots and their necessaries, and for those things of which the coming and departing vessels may stand in need.

“ A fifty-gun ship, with a solid bottom, a well-caulked waist, and the rablets from stern to stem, up and down, starboard and larboard, lined with a sheet of lead, four inches wide, sheathed with nails and red cypress wood to preserve it from the worms, would last at least thirty years in the river. It would be the best substitute for a fort which the nature of the soil renders impossible.”

A fact of some importance is mentioned in this very same despatch: “ Balize Island, they said, which, twenty years ago, was half a league at sea, has now fallen back one league and a half on one side of the river, and joins that projection of land which the Mississippi gradually forms in carrying its waters into the Gulf. In this way the island is now distant from the ships coming from sea. This circumstance makes it the more imperative to establish a floating post.”

If there is no exaggeration in the assertion of the fact mentioned in this despatch, the Mississippi had gained on the Gulf six miles in twenty years, and if his progress has ever after continued in the same proportion, the great Father of Rivers must be, in 1850, about twenty-nine miles farther than in 1754 in his career of conquest over the sea, and in his loving approach toward the fair Island of Cuba.

In the month of December, there was at Mobile a

great festival, given on the occasion of the distribution of presents to the Indians. Satisfied with their share, the Choctaws solemnly voted to Kerlerec the title of *Father of the Choctaws*. But Kerlerec seemed, at this time, to have a sad opinion of the virtues of his children, for he wrote to his government: "I am sufficiently acquainted with the Choctaws to know that they are covetous, lying and treacherous; so that I keep on my guard without showing it." This is a very different appreciation from the one made by Kerlerec the year preceding, when he said of the Choctaws: "*I am satisfied with them. It seems to me that they are true to their plighted faith. They are men who reflect, and who have more logic and precision in their reasoning than it is commonly thought.*" Thus Kerlerec had changed his mind, as other men have done, and will do, on more than one subject.

Whatever was the real character of the Choctaws, they had remained true to the French in making war against the Chickasaws, who would have long since been destroyed, if the Cherokees and Chaouannons, who were in the habit of marrying among them, had not supplied them with constant recruits. But their losses had been so heavy for a series of years, that it was evident that the triumph of the French was soon to be complete over these inveterate enemies.

Although the French Government had recommended the strictest economy, and had diminished the number of the troops, the expenses of the year 1754 rose to 963,124 livres.

The year 1755 brought on an increase of the fear of British invasion. In the month of June, Kerlerec sent twelve men to Cat Island, to watch the approach of the English, who were expected soon to make their appear-

ance at Ship Island; and these men were instructed to give him timely notice of the operations of the enemy. He also increased the fortifications at the English Turn, and he wrote to his government for an additional force of five hundred men. This year, the English had attacked the French in Canada, and Kerlerec had great fears for Louisiana, which the English had always coveted. He became therefore clamorous for help from the mother country. But France was then undergoing the deleterious influence resulting from the Orleans regency, and from the corrupt and pusillanimous reign of Louis XV. Her exhausted energies were not such as to enable her to protect effectually and to preserve her distant possessions.

At that time, there sprang up in the colony a sort of religious warfare, which added to the distraction produced by the expectation of perils from abroad. In 1717, the Capuchins of the province of Champagne, in France, had secured for their body exclusive ecclesiastical jurisdiction over New Orleans and a large portion of the territory of Louisiana. In 1726, the Jesuits had also obtained permission to settle in the colony; and in order to avoid all collision with the Capuchins, their jurisdiction had been confined to a remote region in the upper part of the colony. But they had taken care to procure, as an apparently insignificant favor, that their Superior might reside in New Orleans, *on condition that he should not discharge there any ecclesiastical function, unless it should be with the consent of the Superior of the Capuchins.* This was an entering wedge, which the well known and exquisite dexterity of the Jesuits turned to good purpose, so far as their interest was concerned. Enough had been granted to men in whom the energy of enterprise was equal to the sagacious daring of con-

ception and to the artful readiness of execution. Thus they began with obtaining for their Superior, from the Bishop of Quebec, in whose diocese Louisiana was included, a commission of Grand Vicar, to be carried into effect within the limits of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Capuchins, with which they had no right to interfere, in virtue of the stipulated conditions of the contract entered into between the Capuchins and the India Company, in 1717. The Jesuits pretended that this was not a violation of that contract, because their Superior did not assume to act as *Jesuit*, but as *Grand Vicar* and *representative* of the Bishop of Quebec in his diocese of Louisiana. But the Superior Council, siding with the Capuchins, had refused to admit and to record the nomination made by the Bishop. Nevertheless, the Jesuits had gradually usurped many of the functions of the Capuchins, in spite of the strenuous opposition to the latter, and had carried their audacity so far as to threaten to interdict their rivals altogether. The poor Capuchins, who were completely bewildered, and who were wanting in the spirit and ability necessary to cope with such adversaries, contented themselves with uttering loud complaints, and clamoring for the help of the government. Unluckily for their cause, they had committed the fault of acting with too much expansion of good nature towards the Jesuits. For instance, on the 9th of March, 1752, Reverend Father Dagobert, the Superior of the Capuchins, had had the imprudent courtesy of inviting Father Baudoin, the Superior of the Jesuits, to give his benediction to the Chapel of the Hospital, built for the poor of the parish of New Orleans. Father Baudoin, the Jesuit, assented with pious alacrity to the proposition of Father Dagobert, the Capuchin, which alacrity was stimulated by the circumstance that Father



Dagobert, on that occasion, had, with Christian meekness, offered to act, and did act, as aid or assistant, to the proud Jesuit, that is, in an inferior capacity. Father Baudoin availed himself of this circumstance as a weapon against the Capuchins. He said that he had published his letters patent as Grand Vicar, immediately after having received them, and that, although he had assumed this title, and announced his determination to act as such, no objection had been raised to his causing, in this capacity, certain publication to be made, on the 26th of February, 1752, with regard to the celebration of the Jubilee in the parish of New Orleans; that, subsequently, he had given his benediction, in the same capacity, to the Chapel of the Hospital, and that, having thus been openly recognized Vicar General of Lower Louisiana, it was now too late for the Capuchins to dispute his title and the prerogatives thereto appertaining. This was the question which had agitated the colony for several years, and which still remained undecided in 1755. It was called the *War of the Jesuits and the Capuchins*, and produced much irritation at the time. It gave rise to acrimonious writings, squibs, pasquinades, and satirical songs. The women, in particular, made themselves conspicuous for the vivacity of their zeal either for one or the other party.

The year 1756 passed off without leaving in its course anything worth recording. Kerlerec continued to complain of the grievous state of destitution from which the colony was suffering, and of the intrigues of the English, whom he represented as gaining much ground and influence with the Indians. In a despatch of the 1st of April, he says:—"The governors of Virginia and Carolina have offered rewards for our heads. I believe that the English government is not aware of it; otherwise,



it would be an abomination. Our Indians have frequently proposed to bring to me English scalps, and I have always rejected their offer with indignation." Notwithstanding the destitution in which the colony was represented to be, its expenses went up, this year, to 829,398 livres.

On the 14th of March, 1757, the Intendant Commissary D'Auberville died, and was succeeded *ad interim* by Bobé Desclozeaux.

The English had nearly cut off all communication between France and Louisiana, and Kerlerec found himself so much in want of ammunition, that he sent to Vera Cruz for powder, but all he could obtain from the Governor of that place, was twenty-one thousand six hundred and twenty-three pounds of an inferior quality.

On the 21st of October, Kerlerec informed his government that he had written fifteen despatches in cypher without receiving an answer, and that the colony was so defenceless, that it would yield to the first attack, particularly if the French were abandoned by the Indians, who, so far, had been their allies, and who were showing much dissatisfaction. "The English," Kerlerec wrote, "have taken very efficacious means to capture all ships bound to Louisiana. They have established a permanent cruise at Cape St. Antonio de Cuba, and their privateers, spreading desolation among our coasters, pounce upon them at the very mouth of the Mississippi. In a word, we are lacking in every thing, and the discontent of our Indians is a subject of serious fears. So far, I have quieted them, but it has been at considerable expense. Had it not been for the distribution among them of some merchandise, procured from small vessels which had eluded the vigilance of our enemies,

some revolution fatal to us would have sprung up among the Indians."

Three critical years had elapsed, during which Louisiana seems to have been severed from all communication with France, when, in August, 1758, a new Intendant Commissary, De Rochemore, arrived from the parent country, with some of the supplies which had been so long prayed for. Never had help been more opportune; for the Choctaws, impatient at not receiving their customary presents, had begun acts of hostility against the French. According to a statement made by Kerlerec, the Choctaws could then bring into the field four thousand warriors, and the Alibamons three thousand. "These two nations," said Kerlerec, "are the bulwarks of the colony, and they must be conciliated, cost what may."

Kerlerec also informed his government that his plan, for two years, had been to unite all the Indians of the South and West into a great confederacy, to march at their head against the English settlements, and thus to operate a diversion in favor of De Vaudreuil, who was struggling at the North in the defence of Canada, but that he had, in vain, waited two years for the necessary means to carry his plan into execution.

On the 20th of December, Kerlerec applied for the Cross of St. Louis in favor of Captain Aubry, who was destined, at a future period, to be Governor of Louisiana, and who was to play a conspicuous part in the drama by which her destinies were closed as a French colony. This officer had recently distinguished himself at Fort Duquesne, and previously, on several other occasions. It seems that, on the 14th of September, at six o'clock in the morning, Fort Duquesne had been attacked by an English detachment of nine hundred men. Aubry,

who commanded the Louisiana troops, sallied out at their head to meet the enemy. Notwithstanding three murderous discharges of artillery and musketry, he fell upon the English troops with fixed bayonets, and crushed them entirely. The English left on the battle ground three hundred men, dead or mortally wounded; many were drowned, and two hundred made prisoners. Such is the French report.

The year 1759 was marked in Louisiana by one of those paper money operations, from which she had already suffered so many evils at different times. Hardly had Rochemore been installed in office as Intendant Commissary, when he called in one million eight hundred thousand livres of paper money which circulated in the colony, and converted it into drafts on the treasury in France. He replaced the withdrawn currency by another emission of paper money to the same amount, under the singular pretext of making his administration distinct from that of his predecessor. In so doing he had the hardihood to act in direct opposition to his instructions, and was justly and severely reprimanded for it by his government.

Rochemore seems to have cared very little for the blame he had incurred, and did not hesitate to engage in bitter hostility against Governor Kerlerec, whom he accused of being guilty of an illegal and corrupt traffic with the Indians, secretly carried on under cover of the Governor's Secretary, Titon de Sibèque. He also complained of the extravagant expenses in which the Governor indulged, and informed the French government that the costs of the administration of the colony would, this year, rise to one million of livres.

It appears, however, that Rochemore had irregularities enough of his own to be forgiven, and that he ought not

to have felt justified in looking too closely and too critically into the conduct of others; thus, not only had he assumed the power of issuing paper money, but he had also annulled certain concessions of lands, to bestow those lands on members of his own family. He proceeded to dispose, in the most arbitrary manner, of the King's merchandise, to the safe keeping of which he had appointed his brother-in-law. He whimsically appointed to the office of Comptroller his friend and adviser, Destréhan, who was the Treasurer of the colony: so that Destréhan, the Comptroller, was expected to supervise, direct and control the acts of Destréhan, the Treasurer. He went into suspicious partnerships with certain individuals, to whom he had granted the execution of the public works, and to whom he had made considerable and injudicious advances. For these reasons, and on account of hostility to Kerlerec, Rochemore was dismissed from office by a ministerial decree of the 27th of August, 1759. His secretary, Bellot, a sort of pettifogger, was arrested and sent to France. In the possession of Bellot were found forty thousand livres, which, considering his small salary, could not have been honestly acquired in the course of one year, elapsed since his arrival in the country. Destréhan was ordered back to France, as being *too rich and dangerous*. All those who had supported Rochemore in his opposition to the Governor, and they were numerous, highly connected and powerful, incurred displeasure, reprimand, or dismissal from office, at the hands of the French government, and some of them were forcibly embarked by Kerlerec and transported to France.

There is but too much evidence that, from the foundation of the colony, the French government, the princely merchant Crozat and the India Company had been

shamefully defrauded. Thus, two of the King's ships, which had been sent to Louisiana with merchandise, having arrived on the 17th of August, 1758, were not ready to depart before the 2d of January, 1759, and their expenses, during this unaccountable delay, amounted to 194,099 livres. The Minister of the Marine department made it a ground of energetic complaint against the administration of Louisiana, and he, no doubt with reason, suspected that gross fraud had been practised on the King. The fact is that the fate of Louisiana, as a French colony, was rapidly approaching a crisis, and that the French government had grown disgusted with a possession which had been, for more than half a century, the cause of heavy expenses, without giving even a faint promise of adequate compensation in the future. It is not, therefore, astonishing that the King, for the sake of economy, suppressed at once thirty-six companies of the Louisiana troops, and thereby reduced to almost nothing the forces of the Colony. The colonists, however, were striving to increase their resources and to ameliorate their condition, by engaging with more perseverance, zeal and skill in agricultural pursuits. Dubreuil, one of the richest men of the colony, whose means enabled him to make experiments, and who owned that tract of land where now is Esplanade street, and part of the Third Municipality of New Orleans, seeing that the canes introduced by the Jesuits in 1751 had grown to maturity, and had ever since been cultivated with success, as an article of luxury, which was retailed in the New Orleans market, built a sugar mill and attempted to make sugar. But the attempt proved to be a complete failure.

Although an order had been issued in France, on the 27th August, 1759, to recall Rochemore, he was still in

office on the 2d of January, 1760, and, as Intendant Commissary, he took part in a Court Martial, in which it was unanimously resolved that it was expedient to surround New Orleans with a ditch and palisade, in conformity with a plan made by the engineer Devergés. These fortifications were to be erected at the King's expense, because the inhabitants of New Orleans were too poor to undertake such works, and would be sufficiently taxed with the obligation of keeping them up. The Court Martial was composed of Kerlerec, as Governor, of Rochemore, as Intendant Commissary, and of the following officers: Devergés, D'Herneville, Grand-Pré, Grand-Champ, Maret de la Tour, Bellehot, Favrot, Pontalba, Dorville, and Trudeau. On the 21st of December of the same year, 1760, the projected fortifications were completed, but Kerlerec wrote to his government that, to render them efficient, he wanted artillery, men and ammunition.

The officers who had sided with Rochemore against Kerlerec, and whom Kerlerec had forcibly sent back to France, had been so clamorous against the Governor and had advocated the cause of Rochemore with such zeal, that they had succeeded in suspending the execution of the ministerial order dismissing the Commissary from office. Among these officers, the most active and influential were Grondel and Marigny de Mandeville, and it was not long before Kerlerec perceived that they were no contemptible enemies.

But, in 1761, new complaints, which were countenanced by the Superior Council, having been made against Rochemore, he was definitely recalled, and Foucault, his successor, arrived in June of the same year. Describing the state of the colony in a despatch addressed to his government, Foucault said: "I have found the King's

warehouses entirely empty, merchandise selling at enormous prices, the papers and registers of the administration scattered about and intrusted to clerks, some of whom are no longer in the employment of the colony. There is afloat more than seven millions of paper money. Drafts on the Treasury in France are discounted at 400 and 500 per cent."

Hence it is difficult to imagine a more painful and precarious situation than that in which the colony found itself at the time. A few words, extracted from a despatch written by Kerlerec on the 12th of July, will complete the picture: "The Choctaws and the Alibamons," said he, "harass us daily, to have supplies and merchandise. They threaten to go over to the English, if we cannot relieve them, and, in the mean time, during their frequent visits they devour the little that remains of our provisions and exhaust our meagre stock of merchandise. We have just ground to fear and to expect hostilities from them. Therefore our situation is not tenable, and the whole population is in a state of keen anxiety."

Whilst Kerlerec was drawing up such a delineation of Louisiana, the ambassador of France at the Court of Madrid presented to that government, on the 31st of October, 1761, a memorial in which he made the humiliating confession, that France was unable to protect Louisiana any longer, and solicited the help and co-operation of Spain, to supply the necessary wants of that colony, and to prevent it from falling into the hands of the English. The principal argument used to awaken the sympathy of Spain and to elicit favorable action on her part, was, that Louisiana was then the only bulwark between

\* This means that four or five livres of the paper currency, or of drafts on the Treasury, were given for one livre in specie.



the English and her own colonies. "*This circumstance alone,*" said the French ambassador, "would be deserving of the attention of Spain, if his Catholic Majesty was not disposed, as he is, to afford to France all the assistance in his power." The Ambassador concluded his memorial with the declaration that France would reimburse Spain, with the greatest punctuality, for all the pecuniary advances which she would make, and for all the supplies and ammunition with which she would furnish Louisiana.

Kerlerrec was made acquainted with this application to the Spanish government, and sent couriers in every direction to inform the Indians that, as the Spaniards were going to join the French in the protection of Louisiana, he would soon be in a situation to supply all their wants, and to trade with them on the largest scale. He therefore counselled the Indians to show, on all occasions, their friendship and gratitude to the Spaniards. With a view to strengthen his administration and to prevent opposition to his measures, he proceeded to make some considerable changes among the officers in command. Thus, he gave the command of New Orleans to De la Houssaye, in the place of Belleisle, a friend of Rochemore, and put De Grand-Pré in command of Mobile, removing the incumbent on account of some partiality shown to Rochemore.

But Kerlerrec was doomed to see all his hopes blasted, and to break all his promises. Spain, with her customary prudence, was pondering or dozing on the application made by the French government, and had not allowed herself to be betrayed into any departure from her usually slow mode of acting. She had remained passive so far, and had left Louisiana to her fate, and to the ineffectual protection of France. In 1762, however,



some ships arrived at New Orleans from the parent country, but contributed very little to the relief of the colony. Alluding to these ships, Kerlerec wrote on the 24th of June: "They have brought none of the articles we wanted most, and hardly any of the things mentioned in the invoices. What they have brought is either not to the taste of the Indians, or is of so inferior or bad a quality, that it is without value. I am, therefore, under the shameful and humiliating necessity of not keeping my plighted faith to the savages. What shall I do with those Indian tribes I had convened, under the expectation of the supplies which I was led to believe would soon be at hand? What will be their feelings? How shall I keep them quiet? I am in a frightful position. Is the province of Louisiana destined to be the sport of cupidity and avarice?" /

Rochemore, who had remained in the colony since his removal from office in 1761, now departed for France in July. In a despatch to his government, Kerlerec said: "Rochemore has departed in the *Medea*, with a pocket-book full of bills of credit, which are drawn in favor of another name than his, but which will secure to him a brilliant fortune in France. The object of this substitution of name is to prevent the government from knowing the truth." This despatch contained bitter complaints against certain officers of the colony, such as Belleisle, Grondel, Grand-Champ, D'Hauterive, Marigny de Mandeville, Rocheblave, Broutin, etc. Kerlerec transmitted also to his government a certificate as to the maladministration and evil doings of Rochemore, which was signed by sixty of the most respectable citizens and by the members of the superior Council.

Foucalt, who had succeeded Rochemore, was the very personification of treachery. He managed to keep on

good terms with the Governor, and this functionary, in his despatches, bestowed the highest commendation on the new Commissary. But, whilst Kerlerrec was acting so kindly towards Foucault, this individual was far from returning the favor, and, on the contrary, secretly accused Kerlerrec of every sort of malfeasances, of a wasteful expenditure of the public moneys, and of their appropriation to his own uses and purposes.

Thus matters stood, when, on the 3d of November, 1762, the Marquis of Grimaldi, the Ambassador of Spain at the Court of Versailles, and the Duke of Choiseul, the premier in the French ministry, signed at Fontainebleau, an act by which the French king *ceded to his cousin of Spain, and to his successors, for ever, in full ownership and without any exception or reservation whatever, from the pure impulse of his generous heart, and from the sense of the affection and friendship existing between these two royal persons, all the country known under the name of Louisiana.* This apparent act of generosity had been so spontaneous and unforeseen on the part of the French king, that the Spanish minister had no instructions on the subject, and accepted the gift conditionally, that is, *sub spe rati*, subject to the ratification of his Catholic Majesty.

On the 13th of the same month, the King of Spain declared that, in order the better to cement the union which existed between the two nations as between the two kings, he accepted the donation tendered him by the generosity of his Most Christian Majesty.

These acts of donation and acceptance were kept secret, and the King of France continued to act as sovereign of Louisiana. Thus, on the 1st of January, 1763, he appointed Nicholas Chauvin de la Frènière, Attorney-General, and, on the 10th of February, he appointed, as

Comptroller, Foucault, who already held the office of Intendant Commissary.

On the same day, a treaty of peace was signed at Paris, between the kings of Spain and of France on the one side, and the King of Great Britain on the other, with the consent and acquiescence of the King of Portugal. The Art. 7 said :

“In order to re-establish peace on solid and durable foundations, and to remove for ever all causes of dispute in relation to the limits between the French and British territories on the continent of America, it is agreed that, for the future, the limits between the possessions of his Most Christian Majesty and those of his Britannic Majesty in that part of the world shall be irrevocably fixed by a line drawn along the middle of the River Mississippi, from its source to the River Iberville, and from thence by a line in the middle of that stream and of the Lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain to the sea ; and to that effect, the Most Christian King cedes, in full property and with full guaranty, to his Britannic Majesty, the river and the port of Mobile, and all that he possesses, or has a right to possess, on the left side of the Mississippi, with the exception of the town of New Orleans and the island on which it stands, and which shall be retained by France, with the understanding that the navigation of the Mississippi shall be free and open to the subjects of his Britannic Majesty as well as those of his Most Christian Majesty, in all its length from its source to the sea, and particularly that part of it which is between said Island and New Orleans and the right bank of the River, including egress and ingress at its mouth. It is further stipulated that the ships of both nations shall not be stopped on the river, visited, or subjected to any duty.”

By this treaty the King of France renounced his pretensions to Nova Scotia or Acadia, and guarantied the whole of it with its dependencies to Great Britain, ceding also Canada with its dependencies, and whatever remained of his ancient possessions in that portion of North America.

The King of Spain ceded also to Great Britain the province of Florida, with the port of St. Augustine and the Bay of Pensacola, as well as all the country he possessed, on the continent of North America, to the east and south-east of the River Mississippi.

It will be observed that, by this treaty, the King of France transferred to Great Britain, in 1763, part of what he had already given to Spain in November, 1762. But, probably, Spain had very little objection to resign a portion of an acquisition which had been forced upon her, and to which she did not at the time attach much value.

Thus France, with one stroke of the pen, found herself stripped of those boundless possessions which she had acquired at the cost of so much heroic blood and so much treasure, and which extended in one proud, uninterrupted line, from the mouth of the St. Lawrence to that of the Mississippi. The adventurous and much-enduring population which had settled there, and had overcome so many perils under the flag of France, and for her benefit, was coldly delivered over to the yoke of foreign masters. Tradition points to the spot called "*El ultimo suspiro del Moro*," "the last sigh of the Moor," where the infidel king, driven away from his fair city of Granada, looked back on her white towers glittering in the distance, and wept like a woman for the loss of that which he had not defended like a man. But he of France—the Most Christian Majesty—did he sigh

at the immensity of his loss—he who never had either the tenderness of a woman's heart, the pride of a king, or the courage of a man !

The English called West Florida that portion of territory they had acquired from Spain. George Johnston, having been appointed Governor of West Florida, soon arrived at Pensacola in company with Major Loftus, who was to take command of the Illinois district, and they both lost no time in sending detachments to take possession of forts Condé, Toulouse, Baton Rouge, and Natchez. Thus the British Lion had at last put his paw on a considerable portion of Louisiana, with no doubt a strong desire and with a fair prospect of grasping the rest at no distant time.

On the 16th of March, the King of France, who still acted as Sovereign of that part of Louisiana which he had not ceded to Great Britain, but which he had given away to Spain, announced by a royal ordinance, that he had determined to disband the troops serving in Louisiana, where his intention was to keep only a factory, with four companies of infantry for its protection and police. D'Abbadie was appointed Director of the factory, with the powers of a military commander.

The Indians were much incensed, when they heard of the treaty of cession. They said that the King of France had no right to transfer them over to any white or red chief in the world, and dispose of them like cattle, and they threatened resistance to the execution of the treaty. Several of the small nations, that were much attached to the French, when they saw the French flag pulled down, abandoned their lands, and came down to New Orleans. The Governor praised their fidelity, and granted them lands on the West bank of the Mississippi.

On the 2d of May, Governor Kerlerec wrote to his government that it was expedient to make the customary presents to the Indians, notwithstanding the state of penury in which the treasury then was—1st. Because the government was pledged to it according to its promises, in return for which promises, real services had been performed. 2d. Because this honest and loyal dealing would secure for ever the attachment of the Indians, which would be handed down from generation to generation, and which might be of great help to the French, in case, on a favorable occasion, France should ever attempt to recover by force that of which she had been deprived by force. He added that the Cherokees, the Choctaws and the Alibamons, when united, might set afoot more than twelve thousand warriors, and, therefore, that they would be no despicable auxiliaries in case of need.

On the 29th of June, 1763, D'Abbadie landed at New Orleans, and Kerlerec soon after departed for France, where, on his arrival, he was thrown into the Bastile. He had been Governor of Louisiana about ten years and five months. He was accused of several violations of duty and assumptions of power, and he was reproached, in particular, with having spent ten millions in four years, during the administration of the Intendant Commissary, Rochemore, under the pretence of preparing for war.

When Kerlerec and Rochemore accused each other with such virulence, the colony became divided into two camps, and the French government hesitated between the conflicting testimony adduced by the contending parties; but it is a matter of little importance to posterity to know which of the two was right, or whether both had not acted with impropriety. It is enough to

be informed that their dissensions, like those of their predecessors, proved injurious to the colony; and when each of them, being weighed in his turn, was found wanting in the scales, and alternately kicked the beam, it is probable that both of them deserved the treatment which they received at the hands of their government.

In the archives of the Department of Marine in France is to be found a memorial, written on the 15th of August, 1763, on the situation of Louisiana, by one Redon de Rassac, who seems to have occupied an official position in the colony. Among the causes which he gives, as having operated as obstacles to the prosperity of Louisiana, are the three following, described in his own style:

“1. Under Mr. De Vaudreuil, half of the married women sent to Louisiana had no children, and were between fifty and sixty years of age.

“2. A good many families were located below the English Turn, on marshy and unwholesome ground, requiring incessant labor to make and keep up embankments. To this must be added the deleterious influence of poverty, and of every variety of misery, the abjection of the men, and the prostitution of the women.

“3. The officers, addicted to trading, and converting their soldiers into slaves; a shameful system of plunder, authorized by the governors, provided they had their share of it; the dissolute morals of the military; drunkenness, brawls and duels, by which half of the population was destroyed.”

What a frightful synopsis in these few words! What a picture, if it be a representation of truth!

On the 20th of October, Robert Farmer took possession of Mobile in the name of his Britannic majesty,



and Tombecbee was delivered up to Thomas Ford, on the 23d of November. Hardly had the English set foot on their newly-acquired territory, when the French perceived that they had to deal with neighbors of a very exacting disposition. Thus, on the 5th of December, Colonel Robertson wrote to D'Abbadie, to claim the artillery which had been withdrawn from Mobile, because it belonged, said he, to Great Britain, in virtue of the treaty of cession.

On the 7th of the same month, D'Abbadie answered that *his* construction of the treaty was different from that of Colonel Robertson, because, in his opinion, the words: "The Most Christian King cedes to his Britannic majesty the river and the port of Mobile, and all that he possesses or has a right to possess on the left side of the River Mississippi, with the exception of New Orleans and the island on which it is situated," could apply only to the soil and to the structures standing thereon. He said, however, that, as a favor, he would not remove the guns from Fort Tombecbee and from the fort at the Alibamons, on account of the difficulty which the English might experience in supplying their place; and also that he would leave a few guns in Illinois, in case the English wanted them, but that it should be under a strict inventory, and with the promise on their part to give them back, if he was supported by the French and English governments in his construction of the treaty.

Thus the French governor was acting with a courtesy which does not seem to have been acknowledged by the English, who made for it but a sorry return. "They never fail on every occasion," wrote D'Abbadie, to harass me with innumerable objections and artifices of the pettiest and most groundless chicanery. For instance,



among other things, they maintain that we are bound to protect them against the incursions of the Indians!"

In the Illinois district the Indians showed a disposition to resist the English, and to prevent them from taking possession of the country. Nyon de Villiers, who was the commander of that district, wrote to D'Abbadie that it was the fault of the English if the Indian nations manifested such enmity to them. "The English," said he, "as soon as they became aware of the advantages secured to them by the treaty of cession, kept no measure with the Indians, whom they treated with the harshness and the haughtiness of masters, and whose faults they punished by crucifixion, hanging, and every sort of torments. They wish to wipe away from the minds of the Indians the very recollection of the French name; and, in their harangues to these people, in order to induce them to forego their old attachment for us, they use, in reference to our nation, expressions which are very far from being respectful, not to say gross and rude. I will, however, endeavor to dispose the Indians favorably towards the English, although their hostility to them is very great, and although they refuse to listen to words of peace on this subject. I doubt, therefore, whether the English will be able, for some time, to take possession of this district."

An amiable man this Nyon de Villiers was, who carried Christian humility and charity so far as to attempt to dispose the Indians favorably towards the English, by whom they were *crucified and hung*, to punish them, no doubt, for the fault, among others, of regretting the French! It is indeed curious to observe such anxiety in a Frenchman to serve the English, who, not satisfied with having stript the French of almost all their magnificent American possessions, used, in speaking of their

vanquished foes, *gross and disrespectful expressions!!* The conduct of Villiers was the more remarkable, from the fact that this gentleman was a chivalrous officer, who had highly distinguished himself in battle against the English, and who had had the honor to force Washington to capitulate, at Fort Necessity, on the 4th of July, 1756. When it is considered that, in the opinion of Villiers, his brother Jumonville had been basely assassinated by the English, it must be admitted that his letter, as recorded here, is a monument of his moderation and magnanimity, and is one of the proofs of the more than good faith with which the treaty of cession was executed by the French officers, and another demonstration that the complaints of the English about the obstacles thrown in their way by those officers were not well founded. The circumstances accompanying the death of Jumonville de Villiers had produced in France, at the time, a considerable degree of excitement, and became the subject of a short epic poem by the well-known French author, Thomas.

It will be remembered that the Capuchins had been struggling against the encroachments of the Jesuits, since 1755. But, in 1764, they were rid of their redoubtable adversaries, in consequence of the famous order of expulsion issued by the French Government against this celebrated religious order. All their property in Louisiana was seized, confiscated, and sold for \$180,000, a large sum at that time. It is well known that the Jesuits of Spain and Naples shared the same fate with those of France, and that they were almost simultaneously expelled from all the domains appertaining to those three kingdoms. It was thought that these men, who held, it was said, every consideration secondary to the prosperity of their association, and whose at-

tachment to it did not yield to that of Horatius, Scævola, or Brutus for Rome, had become too powerful; and even kings had been taught to fear their doctrines, which had been represented as dangerous, and their ambition which had expanded in proportion to the vast wealth of their order. When it was subsequently abolished by the Pope himself, in 1773, the shallow multitude, whose look does not penetrate beyond the epidermis of things, thought that the mighty society created by Loyola was really dissolved. But those who were better acquainted with the prodigious organization of the Company of Jesus, and with the vitality it derives from it, smiled at the ignorant credulity of mankind. Were they not right? Does not the year of our Lord, 1850, find the Jesuits in full resurrection everywhere, and is it not likely that they now possess more property in Louisiana than in 1764?

D'Abbadie, in a letter of the 10th of January, 1764, continued to complain bitterly of the conduct of the English. "Immediately," said he, "after the delivering up of Mobile to Mr. Farmer, who took possession of it in the name of his Britannic Majesty, this officer issued a captious decree, which is calculated to produce the greatest anxiety in the minds of the French inhabitants.

"1. He requires the French inhabitants to take the oath of allegiance within three months, if they wish to be protected in their property. What right has he to impose any such obligation on those inhabitants, since the treaty grants them a delay of eighteen months to emigrate, if they choose, and since it is stipulated that they shall be, under no pretext, subjected to any restraint whatsoever?

"2. The French inhabitants are prohibited from

disposing of any land or real estate, until their titles thereto are verified, registered and approved by the commanding officer. No titles are accepted as good, except those which are founded on concessions in due form, given by the governors and the Intendant Commissary of New Orleans, when, on account of the small number of the inhabitants, and of the immense extent of public lands, the mere fact of taking possession and the continuation of it, on permission given to select a tract of land and to clear it of its timber, has always been looked upon as a sufficient title."

On the 17th of April, Aubry, who commanded the four companies left in New Orleans, wrote to the French government: "The English being prevented from going to Illinois by the way of Canada, on account of the hostile attitude of the Indians, have been driven to attempt to ascend the Mississippi up to that territory. Consequently, a number of officers, with three hundred and twenty soldiers, twenty women, and seventeen children, left New Orleans on the 27th of February, under the command of an officer named Loftus, in ten boats and two pirogues. Mr. D'Abbadie had caused the Indians to be harangued in favor of the English, and had ordered the French commanders stationed at the several posts on the bank of the river, to afford aid and protection to Loftus and his party, and had given them Beaurand as interpreter. He had thus done all that he could to ensure the success of their expedition."

On the 15th of March, the convoy had arrived without accident at Pointe Coupée, save the desertion of eighty men. When the English were at Pointe Coupée, something turned up which was very near bringing them into collision with the French. It seems that an Indian slave had fled from New Orleans, and taken

refuge on board of one of the English boats. At Pointe Coupée, this Indian was recognised by his former master, and claimed as a slave. The demand was backed by several persons who knew the man to be a slave, and the French commander granted the order to arrest him, but gave courteous information of the fact to Loftus, before permitting the order to be executed. Loftus, however, disregarding all the reasonings assigned to justify the arrest, declared haughtily that he would protect the slave at all risks, and ordered his detachment to betake themselves to their arms in support of the position he had assumed. The French commander, wishing to avoid a conflict, the consequences of which might be exceedingly serious, had the prudence to yield, and the slave remained free, in spite of the justice of the claim set up to him, in violation of the right of the master, and much to the annoyance and vexation of the inhabitants of Pointe Coupée and of the neighboring Indians, who would have been glad of an opportunity to give, by hard blows, substantial evidence of their feelings towards the English.


At the upper limit of the Parish of Pointe Coupée, Beaurand, the interpreter, took his departure, as it had been agreed upon, but not before having warned the English to beware of the Indians. The advice was kindly meant, but the English took it for an ironical and treacherous show of sympathy.

The English had come up to Davion's Bluff, or Fort Adams, when, on the 19th of March, at ten o'clock in the morning, some Indians, who were in ambuscade on both sides of the river, fired at the two pirogues, which were reconnoitring ahead of the bulk of the convoy, killed six men and wounded seven. The pirogues fell back on the main body of the English, who, without

firing a shot, slunk back to New Orleans, where they arrived on the 22d. The Indians who had attacked them did not number more than thirty men, and might easily have been repulsed. But Loftus and his party were frightened by the bugbear of French treachery, and were under the impression that whole Indian tribes had been instigated to lie in wait for them on their way to Illinois. But no fears can have been more groundless, as demonstrated by the correspondence of the French officers, who acted not only with strict good faith, but also with something like a wonderful abnegation of sensitiveness, of pride, and of long-nourished prejudice towards an hereditary foe.

“On the return of the English commander to New Orleans,” says Aubry, in one of his despatches, “Mr. D’Abbadie expressed to him his regrets at the untoward event which had happened, and tendered all the assistance in his power. But the English officer, far from answering this act of kindness as he should, and far from showing any gratitude for it, said that Mr. D’Abbadie was the cause of the failure of the English expedition, that the Indians had attacked his party in obedience to the orders of D’Abbadie, who afterwards, as he alleged, received from the chief of the Indians in person an account of what had been done. There never was a blacker or more atrocious calumny. Mr. D’Abbadie used his best efforts to induce the Indians to remain quiet, and the English commander seeks in vain to excuse himself for the weakness of his nerves, and the little determination and judgment which he showed on that occasion.”

Much to the displeasure of the English, some of the Indian tribes continued to emigrate and to settle among the French. Two hundred Taensas and about as many



Alibamons were allowed to form two villages on Bayou Lafourche. In relation to these emigrations, D'Abbadie said to his government that they were productive of a good deal of expense, but that it was inevitable, and that he took care that it would be as moderate as possible. He further observed, that these Indians could be turned to useful purposes, and might help in the defence of the colony, which therefore would receive the equivalent of the money they cost the government. But he severely animadverted on other sources of expense.

"The expenses of the several posts in the colony," said he, "are analogous to those incurred in Canada, where, as here, everybody has some sort of justification for everything. It is a chaos of iniquities, the cause of which must be traced up to the chiefs, who ought to have been the first to check all abuses, and who have not done so. I cut down every claim on the government to one fourth, etc., etc.

"With regard to the possession of that part of the colony which has remained ours, I shall always consider it very precarious, until it is made sure by new arrangements; for, how can I keep it without troops, without ammunition, and without ships to protect the navigation of the Gulf, and to defend the mouths of the Mississippi?"

On the 7th of June, D'Abbadie wrote to his government a very interesting letter, containing his views on the situation of the country:

"I have the honor," said he, "to submit my observations on the character and dispositions of the inhabitants of Louisiana. The disorder long existing in the colony, and particularly in its finances, proceeds from the spirit of jobbing which has been prevalent here at all times, and which has engrossed the attention and faculties of



the colonists. It began in 1737, not only on the currency of the country, but also on the bills of exchange, on the merchandise in the King's warehouses, and on everything which was susceptible of it. It is to this pursuit that the inhabitants have been addicted in preference to cultivating their lands, and to any other occupation, by which the prosperity of the colony would have been promoted. I have entirely suppressed the abuse existing in connexion with the King's warehouses, out of which merchandise was extracted to be sold to individuals, and frequently to the King himself.

"The old paper currency, not having been converted by the government into bills of exchange on the French treasury, has no fixed value, but only that which public confidence assigns to it; and it has fallen so low, that it loses three hundred per cent. when exchanged for bills of credit on the treasury at home.

"If the inhabitants of Louisiana had turned their industry to anything else beyond jobbing on the King's paper and merchandise, they would have found great resources in the fertility of the land and the mildness of the climate. But the facility offered by the country to live on its natural productions has created habits of laziness. The immoderate use of taffia (a kind of rum) has stupified the whole population. The vice of drunkenness had even crept into the highest ranks of society, from which, however, it has lately disappeared.

"Hence the spirit of insubordination and independence which has manifested itself under several administrations. I will not relate the excesses and outrages which occurred under Rochemore and Kerlerec. Notwithstanding the present tranquillity, the same spirit of sedition does not the less exist in the colony. It reappears in the thoughtless expressions of some madcaps,



and in the anonymous writings scattered among the public. The uncertainty in which I am, with regard to the ultimate fate of the colony, has prevented me from resorting to extreme measures, to repress such license; but it will be necessary to come to it at last, to re-establish the good order which has been destroyed, and to regulate the conduct and the morals of the inhabitants. To reach this object, what is first to be done is, to make a thorough reform in the composition of the Superior Council. I have already had the honor of expressing my opinion on the members of the council, and particularly on the Attorney-General Lafrénière. Subjects chosen in France, to fill the offices of Counsellors and of Attorney-General, would assist me in the intention I have, to devote myself exclusively to promoting the welfare of this colony, which has been ruined by the effects of jobbing, that first cause of all the evils from which we suffer here. Three-fourths, at least, of the inhabitants are in a state of insolvency. But everything will again be set to rights, and with some advantage, through the severity which is required to enforce the observation of the laws and to maintain good order.

“As I was finishing this letter, the merchants of New Orleans presented me with a petition, a copy of which I have the honor to forward. You will find in it those characteristic features of sedition and insubordination of which I complain. Its allegations are false in every respect, etc., etc.”

D'Abbadie concludes his letter with the observation, that the complaints set forth in this petition of the merchants are presented in a style and manner which deserve *to be treated by the minister with the utmost severity*. In the petition to which D'Abbadie alludes, the merchants complained of the frightful condition of affairs in the

colony, of the repeated postponement of the liquidation of the paper currency, and of the concession by which D'Abbadie granted to a company the exclusive right of trading with the Indians. This petition, which had ruffled D'Abbadie so much, was signed by the principal merchants of New Orleans.

Whilst D'Abbadie was thus addressing the French government, his predecessor, Kerlerec, who was still detained in the Bastille, was striving to excite the sympathies of that same government in his favor, and to prevent himself from being forgotten in his dungeon. To accomplish this object, he laid before the ministry a memorial, in which he attempted to show the utility for France to convert Louisiana, in concert with Spain, into a commercial depot, in order to turn that colony to some profitable account. The minister to whose consideration this document was specially referred, endorsed it with this note :

“Considering that there are in this memorial some details, which might point out to the Court of Madrid proximate causes of conflict with the English, and therefore render the cession of Louisiana less acceptable to Spain, it seems proper that this memorial be recast, so as to produce a favorable impression upon that government.”

It is evident from this circumstance, and from many others, that the French government considered Louisiana as a burden of which it was anxious to disencumber itself, and that it was so fearful of the King of Spain's altering or withdrawing his act of acceptance that it took every precaution to prevent his Catholic Majesty from rejecting the gift tendered to him.

It is not to be wondered at, after all, that France felt inclined to fling away Louisiana, in despair at her want

of success in colonizing that distant possession. Louisiana had proved a dead weight in the hands of the great merchant, Crozat, who had buried several millions in her wilderness. The India Company had, with the same result, devoted over twenty millions to carry into execution, on the banks of the Mississippi, the grand scheme in which her charter originated. With regard to the French government, it does not seem an exaggeration to suppose, that it had squandered from forty to fifty millions of livres in the attempt to colonize Louisiana. Thus an enormous capital had been disbursed, no return had been made for it, and what was still more discouraging, was the conviction brought home to France that if she retained possession of Louisiana, she would be under the necessity of incurring still more considerable expenses, for, at the very moment when the cession of that province was made to Spain, D'Abbadie was informing his government, in repeated despatches, that the colony was in a *state of complete destitution*; that it was a *chaos of iniquities*, and that to re-establish order therein, it would be necessary to have recourse to *measures of an extreme character*. Hence the anxiety of the French government to part with a territory which, at a later period and in abler hands, was destined to astonish the world by its rapid and gigantic prosperity.

In presenting his memorial on Louisiana, the object of Governor Kerlerec had been, no doubt, to show that, although laboring under the displeasure of his government, and immured between the four walls of a prison, he was disposed to act as a useful servant, and he probably hoped, in this way, to procure his release. But his enemies, or at least those who thought they had been his victims, were, at the same time, and in a manner not calculated to help him, calling the attention of the gov-

ernment to his acts whilst Governor of Louisiana. Thus Philippe Marigny de Mandeville, an officer of the marine troops sent to Louisiana, who had been arrested by Governor Kerlerrec, and dismissed back to France, was petitioning the Prime Minister, the Duke of Choiseul, to know the cause of the ill-treatment inflicted upon him, and accusing Kerlerrec of abuse of power, and other violations of duty. To this petition Marigny had annexed two certificates, one from Bienville and the other from Vaudreuil, in which the highest commendation was bestowed upon him by these functionaries, under whom he had served. He was the son of Marigny, who had died in command of New Orleans, as major, and who was a Knight of St. Louis.

On the eve of losing his faithful subjects of Louisiana, the King, to reward some of them for their good services, distributed a few favors among them, and granted the Cross of St. Louis to Favrot, a captain of foot, who had been wounded in the attack on the Village of Ackia, in 1736, and to Nyon de Villiers, who had long been commander of the Illinois District. An individual, named Braud, obtained, on the recommendation of D'Abbadie, the exclusive privilege of printing and of selling books in Louisiana. It was the last monopoly conceded by the French government.

On the 21st of April, 1764, the King wrote to D'Abbadie a letter containing an official communication of the cession of Louisiana to Spain. To this document were annexed copies of the act of cession and of the act of acceptance. The letter of the King ran thus :

“LOUIS XV. TO MR. D'ABBADIE :

“Monsieur D'Abbadie, by a private act passed at Fontainebleau, on the 3d of November, 1762, having,

of my own free will, ceded to my very dear and beloved cousin, the King of Spain, and to his successors and heirs, in full property, completely, and without reserve or restriction, all the country known under the name of Louisiana, and also New Orleans, with the island in which it is situated; and by another act, passed at the Escorial, and signed by the King of Spain, on the 13th of November of the same year, his Catholic Majesty having accepted the cession of Louisiana and of the town of New Orleans, as will appear by copies of said acts hereunto annexed, I write you this letter to inform you, that my intention is, that, on the receipt of it, and of the documents thereto annexed, whether they are handed to you by officers of his Catholic Majesty, or, in a direct line, by the French ships to which they are intrusted, you deliver up into the hands of the Governor, or of the officer appointed to that effect, the said country and colony of Louisiana, with the settlements or posts thereto appertaining, together with the town and island of New Orleans, such as they may be found on the day of said delivery, it being my will that, for the future, they belong to his Catholic Majesty, to be governed and administered by his governors and officers, as belonging to him, fully, and without reserve and exception.

“I order you, accordingly, as soon as the Governor and the troops of that monarch shall have arrived in said country and colony, to put them in possession thereof, and to withdraw all the officers, soldiers, or other persons employed under my government, and to send to France, and to my other colonies of America, such of them as will not be disposed to remain under the Spanish dominion.

“I desire, moreover, that, after the entire evacuation of the said port and town of New Orleans, you gather

up all the papers relative to the finances and administration of the colony of Louisiana, and that you come to France to account for them.

“My intention, is, however, that you deliver up to said Governor, or other officers duly authorized, all the papers and documents which concern specially the government of that colony, either with regard to the limits of that territory, or with regard to the Indians and the different posts, after having obtained proper receipts for your discharge, and that you give to said Governor all the information in your power, to enable him to govern said colony to the mutual satisfaction of both nations.

“My will is, that a duplicate inventory of all the artillery, warehouses, hospitals, vessels and other effects which belong to me in said colony, be made and signed by you and the Commissary of his Catholic Majesty, in order that, after your having put said Commissary in possession of the same, there be drawn up a verbal process of the appraisement of such of said effects as will remain in the colony, and the value of which shall be reimbursed by his Catholic Majesty, in conformity with said appraisement.

“I hope at the same time, for the advantage and tranquillity of the inhabitants of the colony of Louisiana, and I flatter myself, in consequence of the friendship and affection of his Catholic Majesty, that he will be pleased to instruct his Governor, or any other of his officers employed by him in said colony and said town of New Orleans, that all ecclesiastics and religious communities shall continue to perform their functions of curates and missionaries, and to enjoy the rights, privileges and exemptions granted to them; that all the Judges of ordinary jurisdiction, together with the Superior Council, shall continue to administer justice according to the laws,

forms and usages of the colony; that the titles of the inhabitants to their property shall be confirmed in accordance with the concessions made by the Governors and ordaining Commissaries (Commissaires Ordonnateurs) of said colony; and that said concessions shall be looked upon and held as confirmed by his Catholic Majesty, although they may not, as yet, have been confirmed by me; hoping, moreover, that his Catholic Majesty will be pleased to give to his subjects of Louisiana the marks of protection and good will which they have received under my domination, and which would have been made more effectual, if not counteracted by the calamities of war.

“I order you to have this letter registered by the Superior Council of New Orleans, in order that the people of the colony, of all ranks and conditions, be informed of its contents, and that they may avail themselves of it, should need be; such being my sole object in writing this letter.

“I pray God, Monsieur D’Abbadie, to have you in his holy keeping.

(Signed)  
(Countersigned)

LOUIS.  
DUKE DE CHOISEUL.”

Thus ended, in Louisiana, the reign of Louis XV., which was as fatal to France itself, as to its colonial possessions in America.

When D’Abbadie published the instructions he had received, the colony of Louisiana was plunged into the deepest consternation. So far, mere surmises had been afloat as to the misfortune which threatened the colonists; there had been alternate fits of fear and hope, but hope, as is generally the case, had predominated; when, suddenly, truth came in a shape not to be questioned,

and sad reality put to flight all the fond delusions of the heart. Although partially prepared for the present evil by the dismemberment of Louisiana, which had been effected so recently in favor of the English, the fortitude of the colonists had not been steeled to meet this new blow. As Frenchmen, they felt that a deep wound had been inflicted on their pride by the severing in twain of Louisiana, and the distribution of its mutilated parts between England and Spain. As men, they felt the degradation of being bartered away as marketable objects; they felt the loss of their national character and rights, and the humiliation of their sudden transformation into Spaniards or Englishmen without their consent. As colonists, as property owners, as members of a civilized society, they were agitated by all the apprehensions consequent upon a change of laws, manners, customs, habits and government. Such was the state of feeling in Louisiana, when D'Abbadie published the letter of Louis XV. in October, 1764.



### THIRD LECTURE.

**EXECUTION OF THE TREATY OF CESSION TO THE ENGLISH—SMUGGLING TRADE CARRIED ON BY THE ENGLISH—MEANING OF THE PHRASE, "I AM GOING TO LITTLE MANCHAC"—DEATH OF D'ABBADIE—AUBRY, HIS SUCCESSOR—ARRIVAL OF THE ACADIANS IN LOUISIANA—CAUSES OF THEIR EXPULSION FROM ACADIA OR NOVA SCOTIA—THEIR SETTLEMENT IN LOUISIANA—THE MISSISSIPPI, A COMMON THOROUGHFARE FOR THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH—INCONVENIENCE THEREOF—CONSTRUCTION OF ENGLISH FORTS AT MANCHAC, BATON ROUGE, AND NATCHEZ—INTRODUCTION OF NEGROES BY THE ENGLISH—CURIOUS DESPATCH FROM AUBRY ON THE DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY HIM—ORIGIN OF THE NAME OF BATON ROUGE—REPRESENTATIONS TO THE KING MADE BY THE LOUISIANIANS ON THE TREATY OF CESSION—THEY SEND JEAN MILHET AS THEIR DELEGATE TO FRANCE—INTERVIEW OF JEAN MILHET AND BIENVILLE WITH THE DUKE OF CHOISEUL—DEATH OF BIENVILLE—ULLOA APPOINTED GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA BY THE KING OF SPAIN—HIS LETTER TO THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL—HIS ARRIVAL AND RECEPTION—GAYARRE APPOINTED CONTADOR, OR COMPTROLLER, BY THE KING; LOYOLA, COMMISSARY OF WAR AND INTENDANT; NAVARRO, TREASURER—DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN ULLOA AND THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL—HE REFUSES TO SHOW HIS POWERS—HIS REASONS FOR IT—HE VISITS THE DIFFERENT POSTS AND SETTLEMENTS OF THE PROVINCE—HE ORDERS A CENSUS TO BE MADE—ITS RESULT—BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF CHARLES III., ULLOA, LOYOLA, GAYARRE, AND NAVARRO.**

With regard to that part of the Treaty of Cession which concerned the English, the French were executing its provisions with as much celerity as was permitted by the obstacles resulting from the hostility of the Indians to these new European lords and masters. Nyon de Villiers, who had the command of the Illinois District, abandoned it on the 15th of June, 1764, and arrived at New Orleans on the 2d of July, with six officers, sixty-three soldiers, and eighty of the inhabitants, including women and children. The English were indeed eager to avail themselves of all the advantages and acquisitions

they had lately secured, and their ships, much to the mortification of the French, were seen proudly parading up and down on the bed of the old father of rivers. They used to stop, after having passed New Orleans, at the spot where is now situated the city of Lafayette, and they sold contraband goods to the inhabitants of the town and of the neighboring country. The wants of the colony were so pressing at the time, that D'Abbadie overlooked this illegal traffic, which was as advantageous to the colonists as to the English. As it was under the pretext of proceeding to their possessions of Manchac and Baton Rouge, that the English continued to make a stay at the place above designated, it became customary for one to say, when repairing to it for the purpose of smuggling: "I am going to Little Manchac." This phrase became proverbial, and the spot on which is now the city of Lafayette, long retained the name of "Little Manchac."

On the 4th of February, 1765, D'Abbadie died, and Aubry became his successor.

During the course of that year, the population of that part of Louisiana remaining to France was increased by a considerable emigration from the Alibamons and Illinois Districts, which had been ceded to the English, and from the province of Acadia, or Nova Scotia.

The discovery of this province, in 1497, has been attributed to the Cabots, but no settlement was formed in it before 1604, when it was colonized by De Monts and a party of Frenchmen, who, it is said, called it Acadia, from the Indian name of one of its rivers. They were not allowed, however, peaceful possession of the far distant and wild home which they had selected in the rugged country where frowned an almost perpetual winter. The English claimed it as their own domain, in virtue

of the discovery of Sebastian Cabot, and sent a force which succeeded in driving away those whom they looked upon as intruders. In 1621, a grant of the whole of this peninsula, under the name of Nova Scotia, was made to Sir William Alexander. But the French regained a footing in it a second time, and retained it until the strong and ever victorious arm of Cromwell, extending across the Atlantic, reduced them to subjection in 1654. This subjection was not of long duration, and, in 1667, Nova Scotia, or Acadia, was resigned back into the hands of the French by the treaty of Breda. Next came the treaty of Utrecht, in 1713, which expressly conceded Nova Scotia, or Acadia, in its full extent, to England. Then the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, in 1748, *re-established all things as they were before the war*. But hence arose the perplexing questions—What was the state of things before the war? What was the extent of the territory forming the province of Nova Scotia, or Acadia? What were the limits between that province and Canada? From this source sprung claims which brought on, at first, partial collisions between the French and the English colonies on the North American continent, and those collisions were speedily followed by a war between France and England.

By the treaty of Utrecht it had been stipulated that the French colonists of Acadia should retain their possessions. So far, they had refused to take the oath of allegiance as British subjects, except with the condition that it would not obligate them to bear arms against the French, even in defence of the province. The English government had not consented to this modification of the oath of allegiance, but had employed no means of coercion against a poor and scattered population, from which it anticipated no hostility beyond that which

consisted merely in the secret feelings of the heart. When, however, war broke out between the French and the English, the Acadians, who were on the disputed territory, openly sided with the French, and those who were within the unquestionable and avowed limits of Acadia, such as it was admitted by the French themselves to have been ceded by the treaty of 1713, assumed the character and the name of *neutrals*.

“They dwelt principally,” says Williamson in his History of Maine, “about Annapolis, Chignecto, Bay Verte, the Basin of Minas, Cobscook Bay, and in that vicinity—and altogether, made a population of 18,000 souls. They were an industrious, frugal people, strongly attached to the French interest and the Catholic religion. So desirous were they of throwing off the yoke, that they had secretly courted the visit of the French troops, and furnished them and the Indians with intelligence, quarters, provisions, and every assistance, and a part of them had actually taken arms in violation of their oath of neutrality. Nay, all of them, as heretofore, utterly refused to take the oath of unqualified allegiance to the British crown, though such as had not appeared openly in arms, were assured, if they would take it, that they should still be allowed the unmolested enjoyment of their lands and houses.

“Perceiving the indissoluble attachment of the Acadians, ‘*French neutrals*,’ to their parent nation, Lieutenant-Governor Lawrence, and the Provincial Council, with the advice of Admirals Boscawen and Mostyn, finally determined that the whole of them should be removed and dispersed among the British colonies, where they, being unable to unite in any offensive measures, would become naturalized to the government and the country. Without knowing their destiny, they were

summoned to meet in their chapels, September 5th, 1755, to hear their doom. At Grand Pré (Minas and Horton), assembled 1923 persons, aged and young, whom General Winslow met, and after animadverting upon their disloyal conduct, said to them: 'I now declare to you his Majesty's orders. Know then, that your lands, tenements, cattle and live stock of all kinds, are forfeited to the Crown, with all other effects of yours, excepting your money and household goods, which you will be allowed to carry with you: and that yourselves and families are to be removed from this province to places suiting his Majesty's pleasure; and in the meantime, to remain in custody, under the inspection and control of the troops I have the honor to command. In a word, I now declare you all the King's prisoners.' Shocked and petrified at this thrilling decree, some of them burst into tears, and some fled to the woods, whose houses were committed to the flames, and country laid waste, to prevent their subsistence. Indeed, every possible measure was adopted to force them back into captivity.

"When the transports arrived at Annapolis, to convey away the ill-fated people from that place and vicinity, the soldiers found the houses entirely deserted by the inhabitants, who had fled to the woods, carrying with them their aged parents, their wives and children. But hunger, infirmity and distress soon compelled the return of numbers, who surrendered themselves prisoners at discretion. The more athletic penetrated into the depths of the wilderness, and encamped with the savages; and a few wandered through the woods to Chignecto, and thence escaped to Canada.

"In Cumberland, the summons were generally disobeyed, and hence it was found necessary to resort to the

most severe measures. Here, 253 of their houses were set on fire at one time, in which a great quantity of wheat, flax and other valuable articles were consumed: the country presenting, for several days and several miles, a most direful scene of conflagration. As the different Acadian settlements were too widely extended to admit of an actual subjugation at once, only 7,000 were collected at this time and dispersed among the several British colonies. On the 10th of September, 1755, one hundred and sixty-one young men, taken from among the prisoners belonging to the district of Minas, were driven by a military guard on board of five transports stationed in the River Gaspereaux. The road from the chapel to the shore, one mile in length, was lined with women and children, all of whom, bathed in tears, knelt and uttered, amid deep heart-broken sighs—farewell! as the dejected prisoners advanced with slow and reluctant steps, weeping, praying and singing hymns as they passed. These were followed by their seniors, who passed through the same heart-rending scene of sorrow and distress; and when other vessels arrived, they carried away also their wives and children. About 1,300 arrived in Massachusetts and Maine, and became a public charge, principally in consequence of an irreconcilable antipathy to their situation. Also, 415 were sent to Pennsylvania, and some were transported as far south as Georgia. Such was the wretched fate of the French *neutrals*."

A few pages farther, the same author goes on saying: "An act passed the next day (to wit, the 24th of December, 1755,) for the distribution of the French neutrals through the province (Massachusetts), and the support or relief of them in the different towns, as beneficiary paupers. A number were assigned to Maine. The

overseers of the poor were required to make suitable provision for them at the charge of the province, unless they were remunerated by the Crown, or by the Government of Nova Scotia. Bigoted to the Romish religion, necessitous, disaffected and unhappy, they entertained a settled, unconquerable dislike of the English, their habits and sentiments—and being exiles from their native land, which they loved and longed to see, they were neither enterprising nor industrious, but an intolerable burden to the government. According to a committee's report Jan. 25, 1760, there were, even at that time, 1,017 of this miserable people within the province."

Thus the Messenians, after their noble and protracted struggle for independence against the Spartans, being subjugated, were remorselessly driven away by their implacable foes from their blood-stained hearths and the honored graves of their ancestors, to wander through Greece in search of pity and assistance, and of a new home for the houseless exile in the land of the stranger. Thus at a later period, and by a more awful decree, Jerusalem was torn from her foundations, and the Jews sown broad-cast over the face of the earth, to be the beasts of burden, the dogs, the footstools of every nation, or rather to be the swine of the human species, herding through so many centuries in the troughs and sewers of society, and battenning upon its dregs and offals.

The miserable outcasts who, by an English decree, had been made the Messenians and the Jews of America, could never be reconciled to their fate, and, in the words of Williamson, *retained an unconquerable dislike of the English*. The race which, in Acadia, had deprived them of everything, of all that is dear to the human



heart, was the very same race they met in Massachusetts, in Pennsylvania, in Virginia, in all the English colonies to which they were transported. It was the race of their oppressors, and the bread which pity or charity presented to them was English bread offered by an English hand! How could they not be broken-hearted, when the very words of encouragement and consolation in which they were addressed were in a language hateful to their ears! How could they be industrious, when their industry would have brought them into more immediate contact with those they cursed as the authors of their misery! How enterprising in a land from which they longed to flee! How could they forget their wrongs and labor on English ground! How could they plough the soil that England owned, unless it were with the hope of sowing the Dragon's teeth, destined to spring up in hostile array, and to shed the blood that vengeance claimed! During ten years the Acadians thought of nothing else than finding the means of seeking some genial clime, where they could be gathered under the flag of France, and kept their eyes steadily fixed on the French West India Islands, and particularly on Louisiana. Luckily for them, they proved, as they wished, and as the historian of Maine says, *an intolerable burden to the English colonies*, and, after ten years of sufferings and of vain longings, many of them were permitted, encouraged and assisted to execute their deeply cherished design of moving to the French colonies.

Thus, between the 1st of January and the 13th of May, 1765, about six hundred and fifty Acadians had arrived at New Orleans, and from that town had been sent to form settlements in Attakapas and Opelousas, under the command of Andry. In one of his despatches



to his government, the Commissary Foucault observed that these settlements would, in a few years, rise to considerable importance, should Bayou Plaquemine be cleared, and should thereby a free communication be opened from the River Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico. The arrival of these emigrants threw the provincial authorities into a great state of perplexity, by forcing them into expenses which they could not well meet, on account of the deplorable condition of the colonial treasury, and which were incurred to increase the population of a province no longer belonging to France. They felt no less anxiety about their responsibility in making disbursements and in contracting obligations which their government might not approve. But the claims of the unfortunate exiles who had come to seek an asylum in Louisiana and under the French flag were too strong to be resisted, and they obtained all the assistance which the public purse, aided by private charity, could afford.

This, however, was the least of all the difficulties which Aubry and Foucault had to encounter in their administration of the colony. By making the Mississippi a common thoroughfare for the English and the French, a wide door had been opened to jealousies, apprehensions, misunderstandings, and conflicts of every kind. The French saw with distrust the frequent transportation of English troops, through the very heart of the poor remnant of their once so extensive and magnificent possessions. They heard with uneasiness the morning and evening guns which the English fired, as they went up and down the river. This gun-firing greatly alarmed and excited the Indians, who took it as a sign of hostility or triumph. They could hardly be persuaded that it was no more than a military usage, and they had imbibed

the impression that the French admitted their inferiority, or showed cowardice, in not resenting this provocation offered to them. But the acts of English sovereignty were not confined to empty demonstrations and the parade of naval strength. A frigate was sent to the mouth of the Manchac, where she was to remain until a fort should be constructed. It was also known that another frigate was to ascend to Natchez, where the erection of a fort was contemplated.

On the 16th of May, Aubry wrote to his government: "It is for us a new and even an alarming spectacle, to see constantly passing before New Orleans ships of war and foreign troops. Although we are in full peace, and although it seems that we have nothing to fear, yet I feel inwardly, and as it were in spite of myself, alarms on this subject, considering that I have neither ships, nor troops, nor ammunition, to oppose hostile designs, should any such be formed. It seemed to me indecorous not to have any battery on the river; consequently, I had twenty pieces of artillery put on their carriages in front of the barracks. In this way, we shall return more decently the salutes; and, besides, it commands respect.

"The English had flattered themselves to open, with ease, the communication which had long been stopped between Lake Maurepas and the Mississippi, through the River Iberville (now Manchac), which is thirty-five leagues from this town, and where begins the island of New Orleans. But this enterprise is more difficult than they had thought, and Du Parc, an inhabitant of this colony, who had undertaken this task, with the consent of Mr. D'Abbadie, is likely to fail in its execution.

"The government of this colony is more embarrassing

than it ever was. It is exceedingly difficult to conciliate, at the same time, the English, the French, and the Indians, who are here pell-mell.

“The correspondence which I am obliged to have with the English, who write to me from all parts, and particularly with the Governor of Mobile, gives me serious occupation. This governor is an extraordinary man. As he knows that I speak English, he occasionally writes to me in verse. He speaks to me of Francis I. and Charles V. He compares Pontiak, an Indian chief, to Mithridates; he says that he goes to bed with Montesquieu. When there occur some petty difficulties between the inhabitants of New Orleans and Mobile, he quotes to me from the Great Charter (Magna Charta) and the laws of Great Britain. It is said that the English ministry sent him to Mobile to get rid of him, because he was one of the hottest in the opposition. He pays me handsome compliments, which I duly return to him, and upon the whole, he is a man of parts, but a dangerous neighbor, against whom it is well to be on one's guard.

“The ordinary communication from Mobile to New Orleans is through the Lakes and Bayou St. John. So far, we have always permitted the English to pass in that direction. I have lately, however, refused this privilege to Mr. Farmer, who is going to the Illinois with three hundred men. He has the river; let him use it.” And so did the English, in no sparing manner, and much to their commercial advantage. At the fort they had constructed at Manchac, and which they called Fort Bute, in compliment to Lord Bute, the celebrated favorite of their King, as well as at their settlements of Baton Rouge and Natchez, they were carrying on a large contraband trade with the inhabitants of French Louisiana, who used to repair to these places for all their sup-

plies. Besides, the English ships, in going up and down the river, were actively engaged in smuggling, and, especially, discharged at every point a peculiar kind of commodities in the shape of negroes. This became the source of the fortune of more than one planter. As the colony was on the eve of being transferred by France, and was no longer a mart for her trade, the government winked at these illicit transactions.

The settlement of Baton Rouge, which had been ceded to the English, and which they had converted into a depot of contraband trade with the portion of Louisiana that was destined to become Spanish, was then composed of nothing better than a miserable fortlet, and some huts which were scattered about in its neighborhood. The future had in store higher destinies for that locality, which is now one of the most agreeable and loveliest sites in the State of Louisiana. It boasts, in 1850, of a pretty town of four thousand inhabitants, where the federal government of the United States has erected an arsenal and barracks on a large scale and of imposing aspect. There the State penitentiary works its looms, teaches convicts the usefulness and morality of honest industry, and makes guilt itself subservient to the purposes of trade and to plans of reform, if not to the prevention of crime. There the ever-wonderful order of the Jesuits has established a College, and is to locate, it is said, the head-quarters of that spiritual province or circumscription in which Louisiana is included. As a climax of good fortune, the seat of State Government was transferred to that favored spot, on the 1st of December, 1849; and to serve as the capitol of the State, a castellated building has been erected, which is intended to imitate the Anglo-Norman style of architecture, and which seems to look down with the air

of a feudal baron on the town, and on the mighty river rolling majestically at the foot of its snow-white towers.

The capital of Louisiana deserves that the origin of its name of Baton Rouge, or Red Stick, be recorded. It is well known that the cypress tree, in this southern climate, rises to a prodigious height, and that its bark is of a reddish hue. Its trunk is shorn of branches, and its head alone wears a leafy crown. In Nature's book of architecture it represents the pillar with its chapter. Le Page du Pratz relates that, in his time, there was yet to be seen on the present site of the capital of Louisiana a famous cypress tree, out of which a carpenter had offered to build two boats, one of sixteen tons, and the other of fourteen. "As the wood of the cypress tree is red," says Le Page du Pratz, "one of the first travellers who arrived at this locality exclaimed that this tree would make a fine stick! Hence the name of Baton Rouge (Red Stick) given to this place. With regard to the tree, its height has not as yet been measured. It towers almost beyond sight."

If this description be true, this red stick would have deserved to have been handled by one of the Titans of old Greece. The ancient Romans, who used to see omens and presages in everything, would hardly have failed to believe that this prodigy of the vegetable kingdom was the sure sign of some extraordinary destiny for the sacred spot on which it had been planted by the gods.

When the inhabitants of Louisiana had been informed of the treaty of cession to Spain, they had resolved to make representations to the French government. They hoped that the king of France, when made aware of their love and devotion, would retract his donation, and

that they would thus prevent what they all dreaded so much. Consequently, every parish had been invited to send delegates to New Orleans. The invitation was not fruitless, every parish responded to it, and a numerous assembly, composed of some of the most distinguished inhabitants of the colony, met at New Orleans. The principal and most active members were: Lafrénière, the Attorney-General Doucet, St. Lette, Pin, Villeré, D'Arensbourg, Jean Milhet, the wealthiest merchant of the colony, Joseph Milhet, his brother, St. Maxent, De La Chaise, Marquis, Garic, Masan, Massange, Poupet, Noyan, Boisblanc, Grand-Maison, Lalande, Lesassier, Braud, the King's printer, Kernion, Carrère, Des-sales, etc.

The Attorney-General Lafrénière, after having depicted in a very energetic and eloquent speech the sad situation of the colony, presented a resolution by which the colonists, in a body, supplicated the King of France not to sever them from the mother country. The resolution was unanimously adopted, and Jean Milhet was selected to carry it to the foot of the throne.

The first care of Jean Milhet, on his arrival in Paris, was to wait on Bienville. That distinguished man was then in his 86th year, still retaining, however, almost unimpaired, the moral and intellectual faculties which had characterized him through life. The body was nothing but the wreck of a goodly ship, which, after having been long buffeted by the storms of the world, was now fast sinking into the yawning abyss. But the spiritual commander, the soul, unscorched by the fury of the contending elements, fatigued, not subdued or dismayed, could be seen proudly standing on the deck, serenely surveying the afflicting scene and the approaches of dissolution, and ready to spring up, at the last mo-

ment, from where it stood, to the shore of eternal peace and safety. Deeply grieved was he to have lived long enough to see the gradual abasement of France, and the partition of Louisiana between England and Spain. What had become of Canada, his native country? What of half of Louisiana, that colony which he had founded in concert with his beloved brother Iberville? What had become of that splendid creation of his youthful days? Was France now to give up the last inch of that immense territory which he had acquired for her, at the cost of so many perils and so much endurance? Was it for the Spaniards that he called New Orleans into life? Were the Louisianians, were the numerous members of his family, whose home he had established in the cradle of his future fame, were his many friends and the old companions of his labors to be no longer his countrymen? Well may it be imagined with what readiness Bienville accepted the proposition of Milhet, to call with him on the Prime Minister, Duke of Choiseul.

Introduced into the Duke's closet, they laid before him the petition of the inhabitants of Louisiana. Milhet, their delegate, was the first to address the Minister, and urge upon him all the considerations which, he thought, ought to induce France to retain that important possession. Then Bienville, with the authority of his age and past services, and with an eloquence inspired by the deep feelings which overflowed his heart, made a pathetic appeal, not only to the reason, but also to the sensibility of the powerful man who held in his hands the fate of Louisiana. Eloquent indeed he was, for he spoke like a father suing for the life of his child. The Duke listened with courteous attention, but said in reply, and in few words, that he regretted his inability to change the



course of things. Jean Milhet, despairing of success, and with a look of profound affliction, had risen to depart, when Bienville gave way to the emotions which, so far, had been pent up in his heart. Tears gushed from his eyes, his tremulous hands seized those of the Duke, he bent his knee, and in this humble posture, with an almost sobbing voice, he prayed for a reconsideration of the decree issued against the colony. This was too much even for the minister. He appeared greatly moved; he hastily raised up the octogenarian suitor, whom he embraced with respect, and, as it were, in token of the sympathy he felt for a distress he could not relieve. But his resolution was not shaken, and he said in a soothing tone: "Gentlemen, I must put an end to this painful scene. I am deeply grieved at not being able to give you any hope. I have no hesitation in telling you that I cannot address the King on this subject, because I myself advised the cession of Louisiana. Is it not to your knowledge that the colony cannot continue its precarious existence, except at an enormous expense, of which France is now utterly incapable? Is it not better, then, that Louisiana should be given away to a friend and faithful ally, than be wrested from us by an hereditary foe? Farewell—you have my best wishes. I can do no more." Thus dismissed, the noble veteran Bienville staggered out of the minister's room, leaning on the arm of Milhet. Grief had loosened the feeble cords which bound him to life, and, a short time after, he was no more. He had departed to meet his favorite brother Iberville in a better world.

Although Milhet duly informed his fellow-citizens of the result of his mission, yet they continued to flatter themselves with the hope that the treaty of cession would not be carried into execution. This hope was founded



on circumstances which were interpreted by the colonists in a manner favorable to their wishes. For instance, one year had elapsed since the receipt of the letter in which the King had instructed D'Abbadie to deliver up the colony to the first Spanish officer who should present himself with the necessary powers. Such an officer had not as yet arrived, and it seemed that the King of Spain was making no preparation to take possession of the province. Thus the lowering clouds, which had darkened the horizon, were fast sinking away from the sight of the colonists, when they reappeared with a blacker shade on the reception of the news that Don Antonio de Ulloa had been appointed Governor of Louisiana, and had reached Havana. Soon after, on the 10th of July, this officer wrote to the Superior Council at New Orleans the following letter :

“GENTLEMEN,—Having recently been instructed by his Catholic Majesty to repair to your town and take possession of it in his name, and in conformity with the orders of his Most Christian Majesty, I avail myself of this occasion to make you acquainted with my mission, and to give you information that I shall soon have the honor to be among you, in order to proceed to the execution of my commission. I flatter myself beforehand that it will afford me favorable opportunities to render you all the services that you and the inhabitants of your town may desire; of which I beg you to give them the assurance from me, and to let them know that, in acting thus, I only discharge my duty and gratify my inclinations.

ANTONIO DE ULLOA.”

At the moment when the country was thus on the eve of changing its old livery of colonial bondage for

another one, the King of France thought proper to drop, from the table of royal favors, crumbs of consolation for some of the faithful servants whom he was abandoning and sent the decorations of the Cross of St. Louis to Marest de la Tour, Bonille, D'Arensbourg and Lavergne.

August, September, October, November, December, passed away, and Ulloa did not come! What detained him, when so near? Had counter orders arrived? And hope, that feeling happily so congenial to human nature, of so rapid growth and of so slow decay, began to revive in the breasts of the colonists. The year 1766 had begun its onward march, and had brought no Ulloa! Many of the colonists now adopted the conviction, that the Treaty of Cession was nothing but a sham instrument, concealing some diplomatic manœuvring.

In the month of February, 216 Acadians arrived in Louisiana. The exiled families of that race who had first sought refuge in the colony, had set up an example which others had been eager to follow. Implements of husbandry were distributed to them at the cost of the government, and they were authorized to form settlements on both sides of the Mississippi, from the German Coast up to Baton Rouge, and even as high as Pointe Coupée. Hence the name of *Acadian Coast*, which a portion of the banks of the river still bears. To these refugees, during the first year of their settlement, were given the same rations which were allowed the troops of the colony.

On the 5th of March, 1766, the town of New Orleans was thrown into a great state of excitement. The long expected Ulloa had arrived at last, and had landed with two companies of infantry commanded by Piernas. He was accompanied by Loyola as Commissary of War and

Intendant, Gayarre as Contador, or Comptroller, and Navarro as Treasurer. Besides their respective attributions, Gayarre and Navarro were made joint commissioners with Loyola, to take possession of the colony, and to appraise all the objects belonging to the King of France, which the King of Spain might think convenient to keep for his own account. The reception of Ulloa was respectful, but cold and sullen, betokening clearly the discontent of the population. Having been requested by the Superior Council to exhibit his powers, he refused, on the ground that he intended to postpone taking possession of the country until the arrival of all the Spanish forces which he expected. He added that he had nothing to do with the Superior Council, which was nothing else than a civil tribunal, by which he could not possibly be called to any account; and that, with regard to the delivery of the province into his hands, he had to deal only with Governor Aubry, whom he recognized as the sole competent authority in that matter. Here was a bitter pill to swallow; it was the first but decided intimation to the Superior Council, that, henceforward, it was no longer to be what it had been—one of the ruling powers of the colony. The members of that body had been used to believe that they were very great personages; and, to be suddenly told by a new-comer, that he had not of them the same exalted opinion which they themselves entertained, was gall and wormwood. Nothing can be more unforgiving than the wounded pride and self-love of petty functionaries; and there is no doubt but that the cavalier and unconciliating manner in which the members of the Council thought they were treated by Ulloa, was one of the causes of subsequent events.

Ulloa, although refusing to show his powers, and to

take formal possession of the colony, proceeded, however, to visit its different posts and settlements. At Natchitoches, particularly, he remained a considerable time, studying the locality, and making inquiries as to its facilities of communication with the Mexican provinces. He ordered a census to be made of the whole population of Louisiana, and the result was found to be: 1,893 men able to carry arms, 1,044 women, married or unmarried, 1,375 male children, and 1,240 of the other sex. Total, 5,562. The blacks were about as numerous. But the population was somewhat reduced by an epidemic which prevailed in that year (1766), and which, it is said, closely resembled the disease now so well known here under the name of yellow fever.

The monarch whose subjects the inhabitants of Louisiana were destined to be, was far superior, as to the qualifications of a man and of a king, to the feeble and corrupt Louis XV. Charles III., who wore the crown of Spain and of the Indies, was the son of Philip V. and Elizabeth Farnese, and was born in January, 1717.\* Called to the succession of Tuscany, when the last of the Medici had died without leaving heirs to that illustrious name, Charles, before the dawn of adolescence had shaded his chin, appeared in Italy in 1730, at the head of the armies of his father, the Catholic King. Four years after, he invaded the kingdom of Naples, and made a triumphant entry in its noble capital, whose gates had been thrown open at the sight of the heroic hands of Spain. Proud of his son, Philip V. ceded to him all his rights to the kingdom of the two Sicilies. But the imperial troops of Germany were advancing, to wrest from the youthful warrior the fair prize he had grasped so boldly. The battle and victory of Bitonto secured to

\* *Biographie Universelle de Michaud.*

him the crown of which he was worthy, and the Duke of Montemar, who commanded the troops of his Catholic Majesty, received the title of Duke of Bitonto. After having firmly established his authority in the kingdom of Naples, Charles invaded Sicily, and, in less than one year, conquered the whole island. Then, in 1735, he was recognized as King of the two Sicilies by Louis XV., and his ambassador was openly received at the court of that monarch. In 1738, the treaty of peace, signed at Vienna, left him the undisputed master of an Italian kingdom. He had well fought for, and deserved, the splendid acquisition. After having used the sword with distinguished valor, he knew how to wield the sceptre with moderation, and the wisdom and magnanimity of his administration won to him the deep attachment of his subjects.

War again broke out between the great continental powers of Europe, and Italy became, as for ages it had been, the devoted battle ground for the armies of France, Spain and Germany. Very naturally, Charles joined his forces to those of his father. When the jarring elements of strife are at work, England is never far off; and the English admiral Martin presented himself before Naples with a fleet. He threatened to bombard the city, if Charles did not bind himself to remain neutral and not to assist his father. The first impulse of the young King was to refuse the unnatural request. Martin drew his watch, and gave Charles one hour to determine, whether he would yield to the humiliating demand addressed to him, or see his capital battered down. Unfortunately, Naples was in so defenceless a state, that no resistance could be made; and Charles had to obey the stern laws of necessity. But he never forgot the insult, whilst he waited for better times. As soon as the Eng-

lish disappeared, he devoted all the means he could command, to sheltering himself against the repetition of what had so humbled his proud spirit. When from the state of the fortifications he had erected and the implements of defence he had gathered, he thought he was no longer exposed to succumb, in his own palace, to the dictation of an English officer, he marched at the head of his troops to join those of his father, of which he was appointed commander-in-chief, jointly with the Duke of Modena. After some partial success, the combined armies of Spain and Naples were surprised in Velletri by the Prince of Lobkowitz, who commanded the Imperialists. Charles was very near being made prisoner; but the Spaniards speedily repaired the disorder into which they had been thrown, and, in their turn, charged with impetuosity the enemies who had not known how to profit by their momentary advantage. They retrieved by prodigies of valor the negligence which had been so fatal to them, and the defeated Imperialists, in their flight, during which they were hotly pursued to some distance, abandoned a considerable number of cannons and flags to those whom they had, on the first onset, driven away before them in confusion. After this campaign, Charles enjoyed, during fifteen years, the fruits of his good fortune and of his labors. He governed the Kingdom of Naples with the kindness and wisdom of a good and intelligent man, until the 10th of August, 1759, when being called to succeed on the throne of Spain his brother Ferdinand VI., he left the Kingdom of Naples to Ferdinand, his third son. Charles, finding himself at the head of a powerful nation, remembered Admiral Martin, and never failed to avail himself of every opportunity, to show the English that he had a tenacious memory. In 1761, he formed with Louis XV.

the celebrated *family compact* which guaranteed the rights, and gathered up in close union all the forces of the different branches of the house of Bourbon. He did not hesitate to join France in the two wars which she had to wage against England. That of 1762 was not favorable to the two allied powers; Spain lost Havana, twelve ships of the line, immense treasures, the Philippine Islands, and was completely foiled in the campaign which she attempted against Portugal, whose resistance was made effective by the assistance of the English. Charles was obliged to give up Florida in exchange for peace.

The war of 1778 was followed by more satisfactory results. The French Duke of Crillon, the commander of the troops of his Catholic Majesty, took possession of Mahon, in 1781, and by the treaty of peace, Minorca and Florida were restored to Spain. Released from the struggle with so potent an enemy as England, Charles attempted to check the depredations and to punish the insolence of the pirate of Algiers. Count O'Reilly was entrusted with the command of that important expedition. This officer had military talents and zeal, which were admitted even by his enemies; but he was an Irishman by birth, and Spanish pride ill brooked that the services of a foreigner should be preferred to those of so many worthy sons of the land. The death of the Marquis of La Romana, who perished in a skirmish in which he became the victim of his fiery imprudence, gave rise to unfounded suspicions and to seditious clamors. The temper and the situation of the army became such that O'Reilly had to reëmbark it with precipitation. This expedition was as fatal to Charles III. as a similar one had been to Charles V. His only consolation was, to be able to say that he had not been there in person.



Probably, if he had headed his army, his royal presence would have prevented the dissensions and jealousies which ruined the expedition.

This brief abstract of the events which marked the military career of Charles III. proves that it was not inglorious. But this prince showed himself still greater in the civil administration of his kingdom. He carried into execution with indomitable perseverance the plans of useful reforms which he had conceived on ascending the throne. His was the noble conception to revive the energies of that ancient and once so powerful nation, and to rekindle the sacred light of the arts and sciences which the Austrian dynasty of the monarchs of Spain had allowed to be extinguished. His ambition was, to be the Peter the Great of his nation. But his first operations produced a feeling of discontent, which soon ripened into violent opposition. The attachment of the Spanish people to their usages, to their prejudices, and above all, to their national costume, went, at the time, far beyond all that can be imagined and described. The Castilians of all classes were clad in black, and besides, in all seasons, were wrapped in cloaks up to their eyes; a large, broad-brimmed hat was carried in such a way as to complete the concealment of their faces. This mysterious and gloomy costume not only shocked the sight and awakened apprehensions, but also, materially assisted felons in eluding the vigilance of the police. In imitation of the Russian reformer who had commanded his subjects to shave their chins, Charles III. ordered his to lay aside their cloaks and hats. Not so submissive the Spaniards were as the Muscovite serfs. They revolted at what they thought to be a trespass on their rights, and an unwarrantable interference with their taste and comfort. The Wallon guards, who were on



duty at the royal palace, were slaughtered by the populace; but they had made so obstinate a resistance, that they had given time to the King to fly to Aranjuez, where he collected fresh troops. This cloak-and-hat insurrection produced a ministerial change; the Count of Aranda was appointed President of the Council of Castile, and reëstablished good order; the favorite minister of Charles, the Marquis of Squilace, an Italian by birth, was dismissed as being odious to the populace and to the nobility, and a sort of compromise took place between the King and his people as to the hats and cloaks. To gratify their Sovereign, the people gave up their broad-brimmed hats; but in return, to please his loyal subjects, the King had to tolerate the cloaks, provided they should be somewhat curtailed in their length and width. On the faith of these transactions good harmony was restored, and the royal parent and his children were as loving as ever.

Many are the useful establishments and the public monuments which, at the present day, are to be traced up to the reign of Charles III. The high roads in Spain, the Custom House, and the Post Office building in Madrid, the works which have embellished that capital and secured the health of its inhabitants, the Cabinet of Natural History, the Botanical Garden, the Academies of Painting and Drawing, the canal of Tudela, that of Madrid, abandoned since his death, and many other improvements, either originated with, or were perfected by him. He loved an upright and enlightened administration of justice, and selected, with rare discrimination, his magistrates and public functionaries among the most virtuous and learned citizens. From those whom he once tried and found honest and capable, he never withdrew his confidence on any insidious delation or

unfounded and vague accusations. The Counts of Florida Blanca and of Campomanes were raised to the first offices of the Kingdom from a state of obscurity; and, although they were rivals and hostile to each other, they both enjoyed, at the same time, the esteem of their Sovereign, who did not allow himself to be prejudiced by one against the other. Charles had the good sense of employing these two men, each in the department to which he was suited, and never permitted himself to be influenced by their passions. It is by such means that this prince succeeded in rousing Spain from the lethargy in which she had been so long plunged since Philip III. Certainly, nothing but the energetic will of a despotic sovereign could have stirred into action a nation benumbed in its faculties, concentrated within itself, and chilled into petrification. Obstacles of all sorts were to be conquered, and Charles did not shrink from the unpleasant task. We have of him some sayings, which describe perfectly the situation of Spain, the injustice of public opinion, and the turn of mind of that monarch. "My subjects," said he, "are like children who cry when cleansed." Whenever he heard of a love affair, a political intrigue, or a family quarrel, he used to ask: "What monk is there at the bottom of it?" He liked to speak of the dangers and fatigues he had undergone in war, and always treasured up faithfully the recollection of the least service which had been rendered him. The corps of royal Carabineers had distinguished itself in the campaigns of Italy. At Velletri, when Charles was in danger of being made prisoner, the Carabineers saved him. Years had elapsed since that event, when, one day, the Minister of War, proposing to him retrenchments and economical reforms in his military household, summed up all his eloquence to

demonstrate that the corps of Carabineers had a vicious organization, and was more onerous than useful. Charles seemed not to have heard his remarks, and gave no answer. The Minister renewed his attacks, and spoke with more decision and pertinacity. The King who, all the while, was brooding over his anger, thundered out, "If any one dares again speak against my Carabineers, I will have him hung."

In 1759, when he took possession of the throne of Spain, he was surprised to see a grandee of the kingdom presenting himself to perform the functions of Great Chamberlain, which a gentleman of the name of Losada had been accustomed to discharge near his person for many years past. "Where is Losada?" cried out the King, impatiently. The answer was: "Sire, Losada is not a grandee of Spain. The etiquette of the court requires that he who has the honor of serving your Majesty as Great Chamberlain, be invested with that dignity." "Well," said the King, "I make Losada a Duke. Let him come, and give me my shirt." He had, through the benevolence of his nature, retained almost all the servants of his predecessor, and, among others, a valet of the royal chamber, who continued to wait on him for seventeen years. One day, the King heard of his death. "God bless his soul," said he, "for an honest man he was; although, since the first time I saw him at Barcelona, I never could bear him." Charles was the most methodical man of his kingdom, and could, in his actions, have challenged the regularity of a clock. From the 1st of January to the 31st of December, the precise hour for every occupation and every pleasure was set down and minutely observed. Years in advance, every Spaniard knew when the King would go to bed, when he would leave it, and the exact day when he would

undertake a particular journey. He was a sort of almanac in flesh and blood, indicating the rising and setting of the sun. Charles was certainly not gifted with the brilliant qualities of a hero, but possessed a sound judgment, a wise firmness of mind, an excellent understanding, and above all, those qualifications which constitute a good and useful man. The Spaniards still cherish the memory of his paternal administration and of his private virtues. He died in Madrid, on the 14th of December, 1788, at the age of seventy-two, not without having foreseen the storms which threatened Europe and given judicious advice to his successor. When King of Naples, he had created the decoration of the order of St. Janvier, and when King of Spain, that of the Immaculate Conception or Charles III.

Such was the Prince into whose hands Louisiana was to pass. He certainly paid her a great compliment, and gave her the measure of his regard, by the selection which he made of her first governor. He could hardly have sent her a more distinguished character than Don Antonio de Ulloa, who had made himself illustrious in the republic of letters, and who was one of the brightest ornaments of Spain in the eighteenth century by his scientific labors and travels, and by his long and useful services as a naval officer and an administrator.

Antonio de Ulloa\* was born in Seville, on the 12th of January, 1716. His family was already distinguished in the maritime annals of the country, and took care to fit him for their hereditary career by making him go through the best course of studies. He entered the navy as a midshipman, in 1733, and he soon acquired a reputation which surpassed the hopes of his friends and family. The first commission with which he was in-

\* *Biographie Universelle de Michaud.*

trusted, was to join the learned expedition concerted between the governments of Spain and France, to measure an arc of the meridian at the equator, which was an operation desired by the Academy of Sciences of Paris, in order to determine the configuration of the earth, and which was to be executed by three members of that body, Bouguer, La Condamine and Godin.

It being thought that the province of Quito in Peru offered the equatorial station most favorable to that enterprise, which would be a long and laborious one, it had been found necessary to apply to the Spanish government, to obtain leave for foreigners to penetrate into that rich country, as the pioneers of science. Spain had always jealously guarded her provinces of America against foreign intrusion, and against the investigations of curiosity. But the friendship which then united the two courts, and a generous emulation in favor of science, prevailed on every other consideration. It was decided that two officers of the royal navy, capable of assisting the French academicians in their labors, should be sent with them for their protection, and to recommend them to the local authorities, as well as to share, in the name of their country, the honor of that important operation. The King left the choice of the two officers to the Royal Academy of Midshipmen; and the young Antonio de Ulloa, who was hardly nineteen years old, was selected with another officer, named George Juan, who had acquired celebrity as a mathematician. Both worthily executed their commission, worked together with the greatest harmony, and kept themselves free from those bickerings and quarrels which occurred among their French associates. On their return, thirteen years after their departure, and one year before the academicians of

Paris, they published the results of that great expedition. George Juan, having more specially reserved to himself the digesting and editing of the geometrical, physical and astronomical observations, made either in common, or by each of them separately, published in 1748, at the cost of the Spanish government, his volume of "Observations," etc. Madrid, in 4to; and a few months after, Ulloa published also at the cost of the King, the "Historical relation of a voyage made to South America, by order of the King, to measure some degrees of the meridian, and ascertain the true configuration and size of the earth, with divers astronomical and physical observations," etc. Madrid, 1748.

Both departing with the grade of lieutenant of a ship of the line, and with two vessels of war, one of which transported to Carthagená the new Viceroy of Peru, they awaited during five months, in that city, the arrival of the French sloop which at last brought Bouguer, La Condamine and Godin. This long detention enabled them to make numerous observations on the natural history, the statistics of the country, and the manners of its inhabitants, which are fully set forth in the relation of Ulloa, who showed himself possessed of an observing, logical and judicious mind. The members of the expedition, having thus been brought together, departed with a rich supply of mathematical instruments, and repaired to Quito by the way of Porto Bello, Panama and Guayaquil. From the beginning of their trigonometrical labors, in June, 1736, to their completion, Ulloa never ceased contributing to them with a zeal which elicited the praises of his colleagues; he participated in all the operations of Bouguer and La Condamine, whilst George Juan and Godin were engaged, on their side, in making separate calculations and pursuing

a series of triangles. The geometrical measurements were completed only after the lapse of four years, during which these distinguished men, willing to be the martyrs of science, were exposed to innumerable fatigues and perils, either by their long sojourning on snow-covered mountains, amidst dangerous precipices, or by their suddenly passing from those frozen regions to the burning temperature of the plains, or finally by their running foul of the ignorance or prejudices of the inhabitants of those regions, which came very near being fatal to the expedition, in 1739. Ulloa describes, in the most interesting manner, and with touching simplicity, all the sufferings which he and his companions had to endure. What is characteristic, is the difference he shows in recording all that occurred to himself, and he almost omits to mention a very serious illness which brought him to the very verge of the grave in one of the mountainous regions of that country. He illustrates the prejudices of the natives by several humorous anecdotes, and, among others, that of an Indian who, taking these learned men for magicians, fell on his knees before them, and supplicated them to reveal to him who had stolen his ass. Towards the end of September, 1740, when they were making astronomical observations at one of the extremities of the arc of the meridian which had been measured, an order of the Viceroy of Peru obliged the two Spanish officers to proceed suddenly to Lima. War had just broken out between England and Spain, and Vice-Admiral Anson was threatening the coasts of the Spanish possessions. Ulloa and Juan were intrusted with the care of putting in a state of defence the sea-coast in the latitude of Lima and Callao. When this was executed they were permitted to return to Quito, and resume their scientific labors. But soon after they



had reached their destination, they were called to Guayaquil. The sacking of Payta by the English fleet had scattered terror far and wide. It is impossible to form an adequate idea of the fatigues attending their journeys forward and backward, without knowing fully the difficulty of travelling through the mountains of Peru. In every trying circumstance in which they were placed, and whatever were the obstacles they had to overcome, Ulloa and Juan discharged their duties with a zeal and fortitude which cannot be too highly appreciated.

When they had provided for the safety of Guayaquil, only one of them was permitted to depart, and it was Ulloa who, although the season was extremely unfavorable to travelling, hastened back through every fatigue and danger to Quito. On entering that city, he met an order to return in all haste to Lima, whither he went with Juan, who joined him on the way. There they took the command of two frigates, to cruise on the coasts of Chili and of the island of Juan Fernandez. Fortunately, on the arrival of reinforcements, Ulloa and George Juan were permitted to resume their scientific mission at Quito, where, of all the French academicians, they found only Godin, with whom they observed the comet of 1744. At last, impatient for a return to Europe with the fruits of their labors, they embarked at Callao, each in one of two French ships which were to go round Cape Horn on their way to Brest. These ships were separated in a stress of weather; and the one on which Ulloa was, overtook two French ships, with which she was navigating in concert when they were attacked by English privateers, much superior to them in force. After very hard fighting, the two vessels, which had on board three millions of dollars, were captured, and



Ulloa's ship escaped with difficulty. To avoid new dangers, it was thought necessary to proceed in a totally different direction, and the ship sailed towards North America. When she entered Louisbourg, at Cape Breton, all on board congratulated themselves on having escaped from so many dangers; but this feeling of exultation was not of long duration, and they were obliged to surrender to the English, who had just taken that town, and who had designedly kept hoisted up the French flag as a decoy. A prisoner of war, Ulloa was transported to England, where he was treated with much consideration. It is the privilege of the votary of science who has acquired celebrity, to excite universal sympathy. Kindred spirits he meets everywhere, who are linked to him by the freemasonry of learning. So it was with Ulloa, in whose favor many distinguished personages interested themselves, and, among others, the celebrated Vice-President of the Royal Society of London, Martin Folkes. Through their protection, he soon recovered his liberty and papers. Martin Folkes presented him to his colleagues, and had him elected a member of the Society.

Bidding adieu to his English friends, he embarked for Lisbon, whence he proceeded to Madrid, where he arrived in 1746, at the commencement of the reign of Ferdinand VI. He met with the most flattering reception, and was made Captain of a frigate and a commander in the order of St. James. To the relations of his voyage to, and observations in South America, he joined an historical summary of the Peruvian monarchs, from Manco Capac, the first of them, to the latest kings of Spain and of the Indies. Shortly after, Ulloa travelled through a considerable part of Europe by order of the King, and the information he gathered in his travels was happily

applied to the service of the State and to the benefit of the nation.

During the remainder of his active career, Ulloa endeavored to conciliate his taste for study with the numerous commissions with which he was intrusted in the Naval department, and later, in the department of the Interior, where his learning was taxed for the improvement of the domestic industry of the nation. The superintendence of the quicksilver mine of Guancavelica, in Peru, was his reward; but the products of that mine had been greatly curtailed by the avarice and embezzlements of those who had the privilege of working it. Ulloa had the daring to denounce the depredations of some men in power, and the consequence was that he lost his place.

When Charles the Third ascended the throne, his able ministers, who showed great discriminating zeal and patriotism in bringing out all the native talents which Spain possessed, raised Ulloa to the grade of Commodore, and gave him the command of the fleet of the Indies. When, by the treaty of peace of 1762, Louisiana was ceded to Spain, Ulloa was appointed to take possession of that province, to govern it, and to organize, on a proper footing adapted to the wants of the country, the different branches of the Spanish administration. This was a difficult task, and one requiring both the knowledge of the world and the learned wisdom of the closet. Ulloa arrived at New Orleans, as we have seen, on the 5th of March, 1766, and we shall soon have to relate the events which preceded and followed his expulsion from that province.

In the intervals of his campaigns at sea, Ulloa used to correspond with all the men who had acquired celebrity by their learning, and was elected one of the associate

members of the academies of Stockholm and Berlin. Since 1748, he had been one of the regular correspondents of the Academy of Sciences of Paris. In 1772, he published in Madrid, in 1 vol. in 4to, a collection of observations under this title: "Nocticias Americanas, entretenimientos physico historicos sobre la America Meridional, y la Septentrional Oriental." In this work, he reviews the soil, the climate, the vegetable, animal and mineral productions of those vast countries. His disquisitions on marine petrifications, on the Indians, their manners, usages, antiquities, languages, and their probable origin, are full of interest, although some of his hypothetical remarks will hardly be sanctioned by the sobriety of logical deductions. In 1773, he presented to the Spanish ministry another valuable work, on the naval forces of Europe and Africa. In 1778, he published, at Cadix, his observations at sea of the eclipse of the sun which took place in that year. They made known a singular fact, which, for some time, engaged the attention of all the astronomers. The author assures having seen for one minute, during the eclipse of the sun, and to have caused to be seen by several other persons, a brilliant spot on the moon, which he considers to be a real hole through that planet. "According to my calculations," said the celebrated astronomer Lalande, "that hole ought to be forty-five miles in depth, and three hundred and twenty-seven in length. But it cannot be looked upon as a volcano." In the judgment of the same Lalande, Antonio de Ulloa was one of the greatest promoters of Astronomy in Spain, and it was particularly through his exertions that the observatory of Cadix was constructed. This brief sketch is sufficient to show what high grade Ulloa had attained in the hierarchy of the princes of science.

But Ulloa, although possessing in the most eminent degree the theory of navigation, did not rise above mediocrity in its practical application. He, at different times, commanded fleets without flattering results to his fame. He had reached, however, the grade of Lieutenant General of the royal navies of Spain, when he was ordered, in 1779, to cruise in the latitude of the Azore islands, to capture eight English vessels belonging to the India Company, and returning loaded with the wealth of Asia. He was next to proceed to Havana, where he was to be provided with additional forces, to attack the provinces of Florida. His orders were to break the seal of his letters of instructions only in a certain latitude; but Ulloa, absorbed in Astronomical observations, or some deep study, forgot to open his letters of instructions in time, and returned at the expiration of two months, after a useless cruise. He was accused of having allowed the eight English ships to pass without noticing them, and of having suffered a Spanish frigate and a merchant ship from Manilla to be captured within sight of his own fleet without interfering. These were grave accusations, which caused his being arrested and brought, in 1780, before a court martial, which, it must be said, was convened at his own request. Either because the accusation was not proved, or because his superior merit and the eminent services he had rendered to his country, disposed his judges to be indulgent for a fault which had resulted from mere absence of mind—of a mind abstracted in the pursuit of science,—he was honorably acquitted, and retained his grade, titles, and decorations. But he ceased to be employed at sea; he served only as the Commander of maritime departments, and was director general ad interim of the naval armies of Spain. In this capacity, he was trusted with

the examination of the students at the school of marine artillery of Cadix. Ulloa became also minister of the Junta General of Commerce and of the Mint, and died in the island of Leon, on the 3d of July, 1795, at the advanced age of eighty. Townsend, the English traveller, who had visited him in Cadix, eight years before, has left of him the following portrait :

“The Spaniard whose conversation interested me most, was Don Antonio de Ulloa. I found in him a true philosopher, \* full of wit and learning, sprightly in his conversation, free and easy in his manners. He is of a small size, extremely thin, and bending under the weight of years; he was dressed like a farmer, and surrounded by his numerous children, the youngest of whom, two years old, was playing on his knees. In the room where he used to receive his visitors there could be seen, lying confusedly scattered, chairs, tables, trunks, boxes, books, papers, a bedstead, a printing press, umbrellas, articles of clothing, carpenter's tools, mathematical instruments, a barometer, a clock, weapons, paintings, mirrors, fossils, minerals, shells, a kettle, basins, broken pitchers, American antiquities, silver ingots, and a curious mummy of the Canary islands.” This at once gives a key to Ulloa's character. His heart must have been as amiable as his head was profoundly learned.

It is not solely by services rendered to the state, and by his superior acquirements in the highest departments of science, that Ulloa has left a name deservedly honored in his country. Spain owes to him the creation of the first cabinet of natural history, and the first laboratory of metallurgy it possessed; the conception of the canal of Old Castile, for navigation and irrigation commenced

\* In the absence of the original, this is a re-translation from a French translation.

under Charles III. and abandoned after the death of that monarch; the knowledge of platina and its properties; of electricity and artificial magnetism. It is he who perfected the art of engraving and printing in Spain; who directed the Spanish geographers of the time in the composition of a correct map of the Peninsula, who made known the advantages of the wool called *churla*, which resembles that of Canterbury in England, and the secret of manufacturing superfine cloth by mixing this wool with the merino wool. In order to demonstrate the advantages of his discovery, he established at Segovia, with the authorization and on the account of the king, a manufactory, out of which came cloths as superfine as any of those produced in foreign countries. Finally, it was on his earnest representations that young men were sent to different parts of Europe, to be instructed in the liberal and mechanic arts, which he wished to introduce into his own country. Such was the first Spanish Governor given to Louisiana, and well might the most refined and fastidious community have been proud of the choice.

The companions of Ulloa and his associates in power were not unworthy of their chief, and might, at least, have challenged comparison with any of the French rulers who preceded them in the colony.

Don Juan Joseph de Loyola, the commissary of war and military intendant, was, it is said, of the family which boasted of having produced Ignatio de Loyola, the celebrated native of the province of Guipuscoa—at first the noble cavalier, the brilliant courtier, the poet, the intrepid hero; at last, the saintly enthusiast, the extraordinary compound of piety and genius run mad; in a word, the originator of the most powerful association the world ever knew—the founder of the prodigious

order of the Jesuits. Don Juan Joseph de Loyola, was no unfit representative of the name he bore. He had the elegance of manners, the high breeding, and the knightly bravery of his namesake; nay, to make the resemblance stronger, and as it were in proof of the kindred blood he pretended to have in his veins, he seemed to have inherited, as an heirloom, the poetical mind, the heated imagination, and the religious enthusiasm which colored his life, which gleamed like a subdued fire under the crust of his most worldly actions, and marked him as an interesting object of study to the observer, and as a man of no ordinary stamp.

Don Estevan de Gayarre, the contador, or royal auditor and comptroller, was a younger son of a patrician house of the kingdom of Navarre in Spain. At the age of nineteen, on the 1st of November, 1741, he had sought to better his fortunes by the chances of war, and by enlisting in the army. From 1742 to 1748, under the command of his Royal Highness Don Felipe, he served with distinction in Italy. In his first campaign in Piemont, he was in the engagements of Aygabel and St. André; in the second, he shared the dangers of the retreat through the defile of Lañell;\* in the third, he was at the attack of the trenches and batteries of Nice; at the storming of the citadels of Villa Franca and Montalban, in the county of Nice, which were built amidst almost inaccessible rocks; and which could be approached only through narrow gorges and yawning abysses, commanded by a formidable artillery, and defended by a numerous army occupying the neighboring heights. Villa Franca, which is perched on a rock rising up twelve hundred feet, and bristling with guns, was garrisoned by ten

\* This is the Spanish orthography of these names in the documents which I possess.



thousand Piemontese, assisted by the English Admiral Mathews, with a portion of the marines and gunners of his fleet. Both these fortresses, which seemed impregnable, were carried by a simultaneous assault of the French and Spaniards; the Piemontese were cut to pieces, and the English put to flight. Twenty thousand prisoners, among whom was the Count de La Suze, the commander-in-chief, one hundred and seven pieces of artillery, and the conquest of the county of Nice were the results of these two glorious expeditions.

Don Estevan Gayarre was also at the taking of the Post of the Barricades, a pass eighteen feet wide, running between two mountains towering to the sky, and protected by the Stura, which the king of Sardinia had turned from its natural course into the precipice, and by three intrenchments with a covered way; at the siege of Demont, a fortress built at an immense cost on the top of an isolated rock, in the midst of the valley of Stura, and which was taken on the 17th of August, 1744, after a siege of one month; at the siege of the fortified town of Coni, and at what the Spaniards called the *glorious battle of the Campo de la Madona del Holmo*. This battle, in which he was dangerously wounded, is the one which occurred under the walls of Coni, when the combined armies of Spain and France were attacked, on the 30th of September, 1744, by the king of Sardinia at the head of superior forces to those of his adversaries. The Piemontese, with a loss of five thousand men, were beaten back by the French and Spaniards, who fought with the generous emulation of old rivals in feats of arms and deeds of glory. In the campaign of the year 1747, in the county of Nice, Don Estevan Gayarre attracted the notice and obtained the commendation of his superiors, by the zeal and intelligence which he displayed in seve-



ral perilous sallies and partial expeditions which he led through the country.

On the 1st of December, 1751, after having served ten years, he applied to the court to be permitted to retire from the army; and considering, said his certificate of discharge,\* that among the other causes of the step he had taken, was that of his having exhausted his patrimony by his just inclination to, and love of, the military career, and above all, the permanent injury done to his health by the serious wound he had received at the battle of the Madona del Holmo, in 1744, he was graciously granted what he sued for, and was strongly recommended to the royal favor. Probably in consequence of it, he obtained in January, 1752, one of the most important offices at La Coruna, under Don Francisco de Mendoza y Sotomayor, general Contador, or auditor and comptroller for the army and kingdom of Galicia. On the 31st of May, 1765, he received a letter from the Marquis of Piedra Buena, asking him whether he would, as Contador, or royal comptroller of the province of Louisiana, accompany Ulloa to that colony. His answer to this proposition is remarkably in harmony with the reluctance which Spain felt to take possession of the territorial present tendered to her by France, and is a characteristic specimen of the light in which was considered a mission to a country, not then of very good fame, and certainly of very little importance, at the time, in European estimation. In his reply to the Marquis of Piedra Buena, Don Estavan Gayarre says that, "after having had the honor of serving the king twenty-four years, his devotion and fealty to the royal person cannot permit him to refuse to discharge any duties which his

\* La de haver extinguido su patrimonio en justa inclinacion y amor de las armas, y la principal, de la minoracion de su salud por la gravedad de su herida.

majesty might think of imposing upon him." But, on signifying his acceptance to the Marquis of Piedra Buena, he dwells upon the merit which he thinks he deserves by it, and stipulates that his going to America must be understood as not interfering with his promotion in the Peninsula. On the 10th of June, 1765, he was finally appointed by the King: *Contador principal del Ministerio de Guerra y Real Hacienda*, in the province of Louisiana. Thus far go the public documents concerning this gentleman. There are others of a private nature, testifying to his many virtues, to the excellence of his mind, and showing that, in those qualities which adorn the soul, he could hardly be excelled. He possessed, in an eminent degree, all the noble traits of character which distinguish the healthy and hardy race of mountaineers among whom he was born, in the valley of Roncal in Navarre, amidst the impressive scenery of the Pyrennian heights. To those qualifications he owed, no doubt, the many testimonials of respect and esteem he received in the different situations in which he was placed, during the course of a long life vouchsafed to him by Providence.

Don Martin Navarro, the treasurer, represented among his colleagues the democratic element, which, in later days, was to exercise so powerful an influence over the destinies of mankind. He was the son of a poor tavern-keeper, and had risen by dint of industry, perseverance and address. Shrewd, active and honest, he deserved to be trusted; and being withal a boon companion, and skillful in the ways of the world, he had those qualifications which mollify envy, conciliate opposition, and render smooth and easy the path to success. Like water, which seeks its level, his talents and acquirements had,

by slow degrees, raised him to the position in society which was his due.

Such were the men, who, in 1766, had come, in the name of Charles III., king of Spain, and of the Indies, to take possession of the country ceded to him in 1762.

## FOURTH LECTURE.

ULLOA'S SALARY—HIS INSTRUCTIONS—HIS EFFORTS TO KEEP UP THE DEPRECIATED FRENCH PAPER MONEY—THESE EFFORTS ARE COUNTERACTED BY THE COLONISTS—REFUSAL OF THE FRENCH TROOPS TO PASS INTO THE SERVICE OF SPAIN—CAUSES FOR WHICH ULLOA DOES NOT TAKE FORMAL POSSESSION OF THE COLONY—HIS IMPRESSIONS, UNFAVORABLE TO THE POPULATION—FRANCE REFUSES TO PAY THE EXPENSES OF THE COLONY SINCE MARCH, 1766—THEY ARE ASSUMED BY THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT—AUBRY RETAINS THE NOMINAL COMMAND OF THE COLONY, BUT GOVERNS ACCORDING TO ULLOA'S DICTATES—SPANISH COMMERCIAL DECREE, ON THE 6TH OF MAY, 1766—APPOINTMENT OF FRENCH COMMISSARIES TO PURCHASE ARTICLES OF EXPORTATION—ULLOA VISITS THE SEVERAL POSTS AND SETTLEMENTS—OTHER SPANISH DECREE OF COMMERCE IN SEPTEMBER, 1766—EFFECTS OF THAT DECREE—REMONSTRANCES OF THE COLONISTS AGAINST IT—ITS EXECUTION SUSPENDED BY AUBRY—FOUCAULT'S LETTER TO HIS GOVERNMENT ON THE SUBJECT—THE COLONISTS ARE UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT THEIR ANCIENT RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES ARE SECURED UNDER THE TREATY OF CESSION—ULLOA SOJOURNS SEVEN MONTHS AT THE BALIZE—HIS MARRIAGE WITH THE MARCHIONESS OF ABRADO—AUBRY'S DESCRIPTION OF ULLOA'S CHARACTER—COMMUNICATION OF THE MARQUIS OF GRIMALDI TO THE COUNT OF FUENTES ON SPAIN'S DELAY TO TAKE POSSESSION OF LOUISIANA—RETURN OF JEAN MILHET, THE DELEGATE OF THE COLONISTS, TO FRANCE—SIGNS OF HOSTILITY TO THE SPANIARDS—INTENSE COLD IN 1768—INCREASE OF EXCITEMENT—ULLOA'S TASTES, HABITS AND DISPOSITIONS—HIS WIFE GIVES OFFENCE—AUBRY'S OBSERVATIONS ON HIS OWN EXTRAORDINARY POSITION—CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE SPANIARDS—PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONSPIRATORS—CHARACTER OF LAFRÉNIÈRE, THE KING'S ATTORNEY-GENERAL—THE CONSPIRATORS TAKE POSSESSION OF NEW ORLEANS AT THE HEAD OF THE ACADIANS AND GERMANS—GENERAL INSURRECTION—AUBRY'S CONDUCT—ULLOA RETIRES ON BOARD OF THE SPANISH FRIGATE—LOYOLA, GAYARRE, NAVARRO, AND THE OTHER SPANIARDS, ON THE POINT OF BEING EXTERMINATED—THE COLONISTS DEMAND OF THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL THE EXPULSION OF THE SPANIARDS—SPEECH OF LAFRÉNIÈRE IN THE COUNCIL—DECREE OF THE COUNCIL AGAINST ULLOA, GAYARRE, LOYOLA, AND NAVARRO—AUBRY'S PROTEST AGAINST IT—OPINION EMITTED BY FOUCAULT IN THE COUNCIL—DINNER AT FOUCAULT'S HOUSE—THE COUNCIL VISITS THE INSURGENTS IN A BODY—TUMULTUOUS REJOICINGS OF THE PEOPLE—REFLECTIONS.

The annual salary allowed to Don Antonio de Ulloa as Governor, in 1766, of a colony of ten thousand whites

and blacks, was \$6,000. The same sum is granted in 1851, as a sufficient remuneration to the present Governor of Louisiana, with a population of more than 500,000 souls. Considering the difference of circumstances, and of the relative value of money at that time and in our days, it cannot but be seen that there was, in reality, a striking difference between the two salaries. Under the French government the salary of the governor had risen, from two thousand dollars given to Bienville, to ten thousand allowed to the Marquis of Vaudreuil.

Acting with the usual benevolence which formed one of the well-known features of his character, and taking into consideration the habits, customs, prejudices, wants and wishes of his new subjects, Charles III. had given to Ulloa the following instructions:

"I have resolved that, in that new acquisition, there be no change in the administration of its government, and therefore, that it be not subjected to the laws and usages which are observed in my American dominions, from which it is a distinct colony, and with which it is to have no commerce. It is my will that it be independent of the ministry of the Indies (*ministerio de Indias*), of its council, and of the other tribunals annexed to it; and that all which may be relative to that colony shall pass through the Ministry of State (*ministerio de Estado*), and that you communicate to me, through that channel alone, whatever may be appertaining to your government."

It will be recollected that there were in the colony seven millions of paper currency, which had been issued by the French government. When the rumor spread that the Spaniards were coming up the river, among the other causes of consternation was the uncertainty existing as to that currency. Would the Spanish govern-

ment reject it altogether? Would it be suppressed in private transactions? Or, would the new government step into the place of the old, and assume its obligations? In that case, would the paper currency be redeemed at par, or only at a discount of 75 per cent., which the French government had established as the legal amount of its depreciation, although, in fact, in the common run of business among individuals, four dollars in that paper currency represented only one dollar in specie. So intense became the excitement on the subject, that, on the very day of Ulloa's arrival, the intendant commissary Foucault thought himself justified, in his first interview with the Spanish governor, to lay before him the apprehensions of the colonists. Ulloa returned the gracious answer, that he perfectly understood the distress which would result from the suppression of that currency, and that, in order to keep it in circulation until he received instructions to stop it by its conversion into some other currency, he would, immediately after having taken possession of the colony, order that the paper issued by the French government be received as well among the Spaniards as among the French at the rate of 75 per cent., which was the rate of depreciation acknowledged by the government of France. Aubry and Foucault hastened to make public this liberal declaration. But the colonists were not satisfied, and clamored that the paper ought to be taken at par.

So anxious was Ulloa to conciliate those over whose destinies he had come to preside, that, having been informed of their complaints, he resolved, in order to put an end to their discontent, to show them that his intention was that the Spaniards should fare no better than the colonists. To accomplish this object, he bought with dollars, at a discount of seventy-five per cent., all the

paper he could get in the market, and tendered it to the Spanish troops in discharge of one-third of their pay. But these troops obstinately refused to receive it, and Ulloa found himself opposed in this scheme both by the French and the Spaniards. The inhabitants of Louisiana, who were in the habit of losing three dollars in four of the paper currency, in meeting the current expenses of life, and who had been eager to furnish the French government with as much of it as it had chosen to redeem at seventy-five per cent., refused to part with it on the same terms when offered by Ulloa; and although it was to please them and to show his impartiality, that this functionary was attempting to give it in payment to his troops, yet it was with considerable difficulty that he could procure the small quantity which he had tendered to his troops, and at which they had scouted. The colonists gave as a reason, that the king of France would, if Louisiana had not been transferred to Spain, have called in all his paper at par, and that his Catholic Majesty was bound to do the same; they further pretended, that although the colony had ceased to belong to the Most Christian king, yet that, true to the plighted faith of his royal word, he would pay to the last cent the full amount of the depreciated paper. But the whole financial history of the colony gave the most emphatic contradiction to these assertions, and the pretensions of the colonists were provokingly unjust and unreasonable. They originated in the desire of throwing every obstacle in the way of the new government, and this was the true reason why Ulloa's liberality met with so singular a return. This was the first trial which the philosophy of the man of science had to undergo in Louisiana; and it is not unfair to suppose that he came to the conclusion, that he had to deal with a very intractable set of people.

Another cause of irritation for the Spaniards soon followed. France, in order to induce Charles III. to take charge of the burdensome colony of Louisiana, and in order to soften the prospect of the fruitless disbursements with which he was threatened, in case of his accepting the donation pressed upon him, had represented to that monarch that it would not be necessary for Spain to go to the immediate expense of transporting troops, ammunition, etc., to that colony; and had promised that the three hundred men of infantry she had in Louisiana would remain there at the service of his Catholic Majesty, as long as he pleased to retain them. This was the cause of Ulloa's having come only with ninety men to take possession of the province. But the French troops, having for some time past been entitled to their discharge, peremptorily refused to pass into the service of Spain. It was in vain that Aubry, Ulloa, and Foucault assured them that their engagement would not be of long duration, because troops were expected from the Peninsula; it was in vain they were informed that the wish of their king was that they should so enlist, and that a promise to that effect had been made by his Most Christian Majesty; it was in vain that their officers, at least ostensibly, urged them to continue to be on military duty under the Spanish banner. They answered that their time was out; that they were willing, however, not to avail themselves of their right to be discharged, but that it was a sacrifice which they would undergo only to serve their legitimate king under the national flag. Aubry convened all the French officers, laid before them the instructions which he had received from his government, to put the military forces of the colony at the disposal of the Spanish governor, and consulted them on the practicability of coercing the troops into the service of



Spain; but the officers unanimously declared that the attempt would be exceedingly dangerous. Such being the state of affairs, Ulloa gave up all idea of taking possession of the colony for the present; he rented at the extremity of the town some houses, in which he lodged his two companies of foot, and sent immediate information to his government of the circumstances in which he was placed.

The pay of the Spanish soldiers in Havana was thirty-five livres per month; but Ulloa, on his arrival in Louisiana, reduced to seven livres a month the pay of the ninety men he had taken at that city on his way to New Orleans. This was the pay of the French soldiers in Louisiana, and Ulloa had, no doubt, taken this step with a good intention—that of putting the Spanish troops on the same footing with the French, and of preventing any invidious comparison. But it was a stroke of bad policy; it was an act of injustice to the Spanish troops, who became discontented; and it was wanting in liberality to the French, who railed at the ill-timed economy. Probably if Ulloa had raised the French pay of seven livres to the Spanish pay of thirty-five per month, the temptation to enlist would have been so great, that the aversion of the French would have yielded to the allurements tendered to them. Ulloa's course, on this occasion, must certainly be blamed, unless he acted under special instructions.

These were the difficulties he met on the threshold, and they produced on him very unfavorable impressions, to which other circumstances had contributed to give a deeper shade. The influence of physical and external objects, even on the strongest mind, is well known; and it is not therefore astonishing that the gloomy scenery of the Balize, of the heavily timbered and uncultivated

banks of the Mississippi, as well as the miserable appearance of the hamlet of New Orleans, which then numbered no more than three thousand inhabitants of every variety of color and condition, should not have predisposed in favor of Louisiana a man who had revelled, for so many years, amidst the most gorgeous productions of nature and art in Spain, in Peru, and many other parts of the earth. On the 5th of March, when he landed at New Orleans, it was in the midst of a storm, through which the new comers saw, for the first time, the capital of the province lately added to the dominions of the Catholic King, and its aspect looked dismal enough. The inhabitants frowned upon the representative of the majesty of Spain; the French troops spurned the idea of serving under the proud flag of Castile, in spite of the assurance given by their king that their assistance would be secured to the Spaniards, in taking possession of the ceded territory. The French government had, therefore, in the opinion of the Spaniards, been unfaithful to, or unmindful of, its engagements. It was negligence, or breach of faith, and it was resented as such by those whom it had placed in a position full of difficulties.

It must be admitted, and it is abundantly proved by the despatches of the highest functionaries, as well as by the documents containing the written complaints of the inhabitants, that Louisiana had been, since its foundation, that is for sixty-six years, in a starving condition; that being deficient in the knowledge of its internal resources, or rather in energy or will to develop them, it had been almost entirely dependent for its very food and for everything else, on the mother country, which could no longer supply its wants; and that the tenure by which the French king held this possession was so pre-

carious and burdensome, that he had pressed the acceptance of it, as a present, on the Spanish king, who had hesitated to receive the onerous donation, and had consented to it merely to oblige *his beloved cousin of France*. Now when the Spaniards had come at the urgent invitation of France; when they certainly could not make matters worse for the colonists than they had been so far; when, on the contrary, there was a prospect of a change for the better; when the dollars of Spain were to be introduced instead of the stamped paper rags which had constituted the currency of the country; when Ulloa, on the very day of his arrival, had hastened to relieve the uneasiness of the inhabitants, by promising to keep up the depreciated paper at the present rate fixed by France; when he had made known his instructions, that no changes would take place in the civil organization, in the laws, customs and usages of the province; when he had professed in his letter from Havana to the Superior Council, and since, in repeated verbal declarations, that it was both his duty and his most anxious wish to do all in his power to be useful and agreeable to the people; when to remove national prejudices, he had put the Spanish troops on the footing of the French, with regard to their pay, it surely was passing strange, as he thought, that under these circumstances he and his companions should be guests so unwelcome, and even meet with so much undisguised hostility. He felt it keenly.

Ulloa, a few days after his arrival, had sought information from Aubry, as to the resources, the wants, and the character of the province he had come to govern. From certain expressions, which perhaps had dropped imprudently from the French governor, and from a perusal of the documents to which he was allowed access,

Ulloa drew conclusions which may explain his subsequent acts, and some of the reproaches to which they gave rise. He saw that, from the earliest day of the existence of the colony, from Lamothe Cadillac to D'Abbadie, almost all its governors and high dignitaries had represented its inhabitants as a set of reprobates, infected with the *rebellious spirit of republicanism*; that it had been, without interruption, the prey of intestine dissensions, one half of the functionaries and of the population having hardly ever ceased to be arrayed against the other; and that they agreed only in one thing—that is, in accusing each other of the most shameless corruption and hateful malfeasances. Thus he found on record, under the hand and seal of his predecessors, through a long series of years, that Louisiana was, in the words of D'Abbadie, *a chaos of iniquity and discord*; and Aubry, the last of the French rulers, far from having said one word in extenuation of the sweeping condemnation, had given Ulloa to understand, that between the perversity and the insubordination which prevailed in the past, and that which existed in the present, there was no perceptible difference. As if this was not enough, Kerlerec, who was still detained in the Bastille, wrote to Ulloa a letter, in which he gave him a frightful picture of Louisiana, which he had administered ten years, and he concluded, saying: *From the bottom of my heart I pity you for having been sent to such a country!* The Superior Council, the king's attorney-general, and other personages who, by their offices, their rank, or their wealth, occupied a high position, had those enemies whom men, under such circumstances, generally meet in their path, and who are generated either by envy, or by the resentment resulting from the existence of real or supposed wrongs. These and other malcon-

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tents, who are always to be found in every community, poured also their denunciations into the ears of Ulloa, upon whose mind and temper it is easy to conceive the effect produced by these accusations, coupled with what he had seen and experienced since his arrival.

If Ulloa could not take possession of the colony for the causes already known, the French authorities had no longer the means of carrying on the old government, because they had been informed by the French ministry, that their drafts on the Treasury of France for colonial expenses would no longer be accepted. Not only were they not permitted to issue any further drafts, but also, even those they had given to meet the expenses of the years 1763, 1764, 1765, had been kept in abeyance by the French government, on the ground that the province had become Spanish since the very day of the cession, although the Spaniards had delayed taking possession; and that the French had only administered as trustees, on the account and for the benefit of Spain; wherefore that power was bound to pay all the expenses made by the French authorities. To relieve the officers of his Most Christian Majesty from their embarrassments, and the colony from the state of misery to which it had been reduced by this decision of the French court, Ulloa agreed to loan to Foucault the money necessary to discharge some of the most pressing obligations contracted by the French government before his coming to the colony, and assumed to take for the account of Spain all the expenses of the administration since the 5th of March, 1766, when he had landed at New Orleans. Governor Aubry and the Intendant Commissary Foucault greedily assented to this proposition, and all the public functionaries and the troops, as well as the rations given to the Acadians, and all the other expenses, were pro-

vided for out of the Spanish treasury, as if Ulloa had taken formal possession. It was further understood that, considering that the French troops refused to obey the Spanish governor, Aubry would remain the apparent and nominal chief of the colony, but would govern according to the dictates of Ulloa. This expedient having been hit upon, the wheels of the government, which had threatened to stop, resumed their rotation. Ulloa commanded, and Aubry faithfully executed; the one was the head, and the other the arm. The leaders of the party opposed to the Spaniards set up a cry of indignation at what they called a shameful compromise, a slavish surrender of the dignity and independence of their nation in the person of the French governor. But the middle course adopted by the French and Spanish authorities seems to have been the wisest, nay, the only one that could have been followed. What else could have been done? Ulloa held the purse, and Aubry the sword. Without some compromise between the two, it is evident that no government could have subsisted.

On the 6th of May, the Spanish government issued a decree permitting, by a special favor, a direct commerce between the French colonies and its American possessions, from which, on the fulfillment of certain formalities, cattle and grains might be exported, provided it should be in Spanish ships from Caraccas. To prevent smuggling and other frauds, there was to be a port designated in every province, where two French commissaries were to reside, and be authorized to purchase the articles allowed to be exported. There was a duty of five per cent. to be paid on all exportations. From Louisiana, lumber, rice, corn and other productions of the soil, were permitted to be exported. Favre d'Aunoy and Villars were appointed French commissaries at

New Orleans, with a salary of 4,000 livres, or 800 dollars, each.

After having made this decree public, Ulloa departed to visit the several posts and settlements. In relation to those establishments, Captain Pitman, in his work published in London in 1770 on the European settlements on the Mississippi, relates an anecdote illustrative of the state of things and manners existing at the time. "This settlement (Opelousas) was made," said he, "under the direction of Mons. D'Abbadie, in the year 1763, and was governed by a French officer, named Pélerin, till the year 1767, when the inhabitants, who had been oppressed by the tyranny which has been always exerted by officers of that nation commanding outposts, complained to Don Antonio de Ulloa and Mons. Aubry, accusing him (Pélerin) also of sacrilege, he having forcibly taken possession of the plate destined to the use of the altar, and used it at his own table, under pretence of keeping it in security. This worked his ruin more effectually than his ill treatment of the inhabitants, and he was threatened with excommunication. However, he was punished by undergoing severe penances enjoined by the priests, and rendered incapable, by a sentence of a court martial of French officers, of any employment military or civil. The government of this settlement was afterwards vested in a magistrate to be chosen annually by the inhabitants from among themselves. One company of militia was also raised for the defence of the establishment, and the officers received pay from the Spanish government."

On the 6th and 7th of September, a score of soldiers, with fixed bayonets, and preceded by a drum, whose solemn and loud beating attracted the attention and excited the anger of the inhabitants, paraded the streets



of New Orleans, and proclaimed, by the order of Aubry, an ordinance which had been dictated by Ulloa, in conformity with the instructions he had received from Spain. It contained commercial regulations; and among others the following—French ships had leave to bring from Martinique and St. Domingo wine, flour and other supplies, provided they carried back in return the lumber and other productions of the colony. Passports were to be given to French ships exporting from the kingdom of France the merchandise and other supplies necessary to Louisiana; but “whereas,” said the ordinance, “these permissions have been granted only with a view to benefit the inhabitants of the colony; and whereas the merchants have asked for their goods, and particularly for their wines, an extraordinary price, and have refused to receive in payment any other currency than dollars, which pretension is very prejudicial to the inhabitants; now, in consequence of the orders of his Catholic Majesty, addressed to Mr. de Ulloa, and by him communicated to us, we, Philip Aubry, etc., etc., have decreed that all captains coming from St. Domingo, as well as from France, and provided with a passport from his excellency, the secretary of state of his Catholic Majesty (for otherwise they would not be admitted into the colony), shall be bound, on their arrival, to present themselves to Mr. de Ulloa, with their bills of lading and passports, and are prohibited from discharging any portion of their goods, without, beforehand, obtaining his permission in writing at the bottom of their passports or bills of lading; and the agents for those goods are also ordered to present themselves before Mr. de Ulloa, and to furnish him with a note indicating the price at which they intend to sell their goods, which goods shall be examined and appraised by impartial and



intelligent persons residing in the colony ; and should the prices demanded be excessive, the owners of the goods shall not be allowed to sell them here, and shall be obliged to go to another market. The merchants shall be bound to receive the currency of the country in payment for their goods, and to take one-third of their return cargo in lumber and other productions of the colony."

A sudden jar in a beehive would not have produced more buzzing and stirring than did this ordinance in New Orleans. Although it seems to have been framed in the interest of the consumers, yet it certainly was a severe blow to the importers, and they resented it as such. On the 8th of September, two days after its promulgation, the merchants of New Orleans, in a body, presented to the Superior Council, through the attorney-general Lafrénière, a petition in which they begged that the execution of Aubry's decree be suspended until they should be heard on the subject, and sued for the grant of a delay to prepare their remonstrances, which were submitted to the council on the 12th ; and also all the captains of ships in the colony presented a document of the same nature.

The remonstrances of the merchants and captains were founded on the belief of the existence of certain restrictions imposed on the government of Spain by France, when she ceded Louisiana. The commissary Foucault seemed to have been himself under a similar impression ; for on the 29th of September, he wrote to the minister of the marine department : "It has not been the intention of his majesty, on making the cession, to strip for the benefit of Spain his loyal subjects of the privileges and exemptions which they had always enjoyed. I beg your excellency to transmit

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to us the necessary orders, to confirm the subjects of the king in the belief that they have suffered no diminution of the advantages granted to them by his majesty."

The petitions laid before the council were not acted upon. A verbal declaration made by Aubry, that, on reflection, he would suspend the execution of his ordinance, was considered by that body as sufficient for the time. "But," said Foucault in one of his despatches, "the revocation of the ordinance, not having been made in due form, gives no security. Several persons have written to the other colonies to suspend all shipments to this one. For several months past there have come but few French ships, and none belonging to the English. These last had always been of great assistance by furnishing us with flour, of which their cargoes were generally composed; and as my supplies are very limited, I shall be reduced to the necessity of giving nothing but rice to the troops, and to the other persons entitled to rations."

It seems as if nothing could convince the colonists that the cession of Louisiana to Spain was serious and conclusive. Yet they must have been prepared for it by the transmission of half of the territory to the English, who had already taken final possession. Would France have abandoned so rich a portion of her domain, if she had not determined to part with the rest? Was it not to the knowledge of all, that the French government had refused to accept the drafts issued for the expenses of the colony during the years 1763, 1764, 1765, on the ground that those expenses were to be paid by Spain? Was not then the cession an accomplished fact, a bona fide transaction; and therefore was not France holding Louisiana only as a mere trustee, until the new owner should take possession?

It is evident that the colonists were bent upon giving to the king's letter to D'Abbadie much more importance than it really had, and looked upon it as a sort of Magna Charta, binding on the king of Spain, whilst it could have no such effect. When the king of France, informing the inhabitants of Louisiana that he had placed them under the domination of Spain, told them that he hoped that his Catholic Majesty would maintain them in the enjoyment of all their rights and privileges, and would make no innovation in the order of things to which they were accustomed, and in the laws to which they had always been subjected, it is apparent that he had no other object than that of gilding the bitter pill which they had to swallow. Besides, the colonists had been made acquainted with the acts of donation and acceptance, and the mere perusal of those documents ought to have convinced them that the cession was without reserve and condition. The very letter on which they were basing their pretensions and remonstrances had been addressed by the French king to one of his own officers, after the unconditional alienation of the colony. The king of Spain was not a party to that instrument, and could not even be supposed to know of its existence. After all, had it been officially communicated to him, it contained merely the expression of wishes on the part of the king of France, which the king of Spain might or might not take into consideration. Those wishes could not be construed into imposing any binding obligation on the Spanish government, and therefore could not constitute rights of which the colonists could avail themselves. Nevertheless, although they could not claim anything of *right, and in law*, by virtue of the French king's letter to D'Abbadie, yet they might have relied on it, *in equity*, as having

some moral force, when making an appeal to the generosity and magnanimity of the King of Spain.

Whilst the colonists were in that state of excitement, Ulloa left New Orleans and departed for the Balize, in the month of September. At first it was rumored that he had gone to meet the Spanish troops which he expected; and this rumor kept alive the anxiety which had so long agitated the colony. But when October and November had elapsed, the people began to wonder at what might detain the Spanish governor in the dismal spot to which he had retired. The month of December came on with its freezing northern blasts, but did not drive away Ulloa back to New Orleans in search of more comfortable quarters. January and February swept by with their dreary train of howling storms, and sharp edged cold, and piercing sleet, convulsing the broad bosom of the Mexican gulf; and yet it seemed that a spell kept Ulloa rooted in the midst of what, to every other, must have looked as the worst abode on earth. At a loss for discovering a motive sufficiently strong to warrant so strange a conduct on the part of the unpopular Spaniard, the colonists came to the settled conviction that the hatred he had conceived for them was such, that rather than live among them, and purposely to show his feelings, he had taken the step which astonished them so much, and their resentment rose in proportion to the enmity which they supposed to exist against them.

Loyola, Gayarre, and Navarro had, alternately and successively, visited their chief at the Balize, and whenever they returned to New Orleans, earnest attempts were made to draw from them some information as to the motives, the feelings, and the plans of Ulloa. But these officers had answered in a manner which had par-

ried and silenced all inquiry. Aubry himself paid a visit to Ulloa, at the Balize. Ulloa then proposed to him that he, Ulloa, should take possession of the colony at the Balize, and that the French flag be withdrawn, to be succeeded by the Spanish flag. This proposition surprised and embarrassed Aubry, who observed that the inhabitants, and even the strangers who were in the colony, would be astonished if such an out-of-the-way place were chosen for the theatre of so important a ceremony. He remonstrated that it was proper that it should be performed with all the requisite pomp and dignity in the capital itself, and in the presence of all the inhabitants, who would come to take the oath of allegiance, and who would assure him of their inviolable fidelity to the service of his Catholic Majesty. But Ulloa persisted in his proposition, and although it seemed singular to Aubry, this officer after some difficulties finally consented to it. Accordingly, in the evening, an instrument was drawn in writing, by which Aubry declared that he had delivered up the colony to Ulloa, but retained its government until the arrival of the Spanish troops. This document was signed by these two high functionaries. However, on the next morning, which was the time fixed for the formal taking possession of Louisiana by the Spaniards, Ulloa declared that he had reflected during the night on what had been done the day previous, and that he now thought that it would be better to postpone the contemplated ceremony until the arrival of the Spanish troops; but that although the engagement they had concluded together had not been completed, yet he would send a copy of the document they had signed to his court, and that Aubry might do the same with regard to his government, should he deem it necessary. Two days after, on Aubry preparing to

return to New Orleans, Ulloa requested him to order the French commander at the Balize to pull down the French flag, and to hoist up the Spanish, whenever he, Ulloa, should desire it. Aubry acquiesced in this request, and went back to New Orleans; where, to the disquietude and indignation of the inhabitants, he related what had occurred between Ulloa and himself, and sent a detailed account of it to the French court.

But still the inquiry remained unanswered. What could have induced Ulloa, during so many months, and even in the depth of winter, to lock himself up in a miserable shed at the Balize? It is true that when he left New Orleans for the mouth of the Mississippi, he had given it to be understood that his object was to establish a Spanish post at that locality; but that was, at farthest, the work of a few days, and it certainly was not an object of sufficient importance to detain the Spanish governor more than a very short time. Whatever his motives might be, people were amazed at the fortitude which Ulloa must have possessed to have remained so long at such a spot. How did he pass his time? How could he live there at all? How is it that he did not die, either from want of comfort and of company, or from weariness of spirit and despair? Was he mad? How could anybody but a prejudiced ascetic, and iron-willed Spaniard forego the conveniences of a home in New Orleans to perch, like a sea-bird, during the wintry season, on the shaking piles driven into the mud and amidst the reeds of the mouth of the Mississippi? These were the reflections and inquiries.

But such a mind as that of Ulloa carried within itself a world of enjoyments, which few dreamed of. The man who, when in command of a fleet, became so abstracted in scientific pursuits as to forget the instructions which

ordered him to capture eight English ships loaded with the wealth of India, could live apart from the world, forgetting, and perhaps happy to be forgotten. He had carried to the Balize his books, his manuscripts, his mathematical, astronomical, and other scientific instruments; and when surrounded by them he could bid defiance to the cares of office, to time itself, and to the other foul fiends which persecute mankind. His body was at the Balize, but his mind was diffused through space and through the universe. What did he care for the moaning reeds, for the shrieking winds, for the pitiless storms, for the roaring waves, for the tottering shelter, for the humble abode, for the dark face of nature? Could he not light it up and change it at will? Had he not the enchanter's wand? Had he not Aladdin's lamp? Was he confined by place or time? Could he not go back to the creation of the earth, study it in its primitive and almost chaotic state, and follow it up, through its infinite modifications, to its present organization? Could he not, when it suited his pleasure, live for days among the Persians, the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans of old, and pursue through centuries the mighty revolutions of empires—the births, the struggles, and the deaths of nations? Could he not dive into the bowels of the earth to revel in its mysteries? Could he not, on the wings of imagination, return to the gorgeous sceneries of Peru, or to the Arabian palaces of Spain? Could he not sail with the clouds, to mark the formation of lightning, and the other prodigies of the air? Were not the elements his companions, holding with him such converse as unfits one for the inane talk and flat communion of man? Towering far above the flight of the eagle, could he not ascend among the planets, to solve some great problem of the Deity, or



To follow through the night the moving moon,  
The stars, and their developments ?

Far happier, indeed, was he, the gifted son of science, in the solitude of the Balize than in New Orleans, where he was constantly dragged back from the heaven of the student to the petty miseries of earth, and recalled to a painful sense of his official duties and of their annoyances.

In the month of March, 1767, a piece of news reached New Orleans, which became the wonder of the day, and explained the enigma of Ulloa's sojourn at the Balize. For seven months the illustrious companion of La Condamine, the celebrated member and correspondent of so many learned academies had been with the romantic gallantry of the time of Ferdinand and Isabella, awaiting the arrival of his bride, who was no less than the young and beautiful Marchioness of Abrado, one of the richest women of Peru, whom he had known when travelling in that country. Ulloa was then fifty-one years old, and possessed few of those attractions which, in the common estimate of the world, are supposed to be valued by the daughters of Eve. The good luck of the hated Spaniard excited envy, and gave fresh fuel to the hostility already existing against him. He was married at the Balize by his chaplain, and immediately after came up to New Orleans with his Peruvian wife.

It seems, from several of Aubry's despatches, that, in his opinion, the Spanish Governor was deficient in those qualifications which endear a man to those over whom he is called to rule. In a communication of the 30th of March to his government, he said: "The Governor whom his Catholic Majesty has sent here, is a man full of merit, learning and talents, but, as an exception to the well known temperament of his nation, he is exceed-



ingly hasty, and it seems to me, that he does not listen sufficiently to the representations addressed to him. It is a cause of discontent in those who have to deal with him.

“Considering the change of government which the colony has to undergo, I had wished that the officer sent to assume its command, had possessed the art of managing the public mind, and of gaining the hearts of the inhabitants. Men are not to be ruled with haughtiness and pride, with threats and punishments. Marks of kindness and benevolence, with judicious promises, would have been necessary to reconcile the colonists to the change of dominion which has come over them. This was the only course to be pursued, in order to win the affection of new subjects, who regret their former master. If the Spaniards do not act with mildness, and if they attempt to govern this colony like a Mexican Presidio,\* most of the inhabitants will abandon their lands, to cross over to the English, who are on the opposite side, and who will neglect nothing to attract them. In this way, the Spanish portion of Louisiana, which had remarkably increased in population for the last few years, will soon become a desert.” He concluded with informing the French Court, that the measures adopted by Ulloa were not calculated to give popularity to the Spanish government.

In relation to the reproaches which were addressed to the Spaniards, as to their delaying so long the taking possession of Louisiana, and in relation to the expenses of the colony, which France wished Spain to pay, back to 1763, the Marquis of Grimaldi, who was a member of the cabinet of Madrid, wrote as follows, on the 11th of

\* A Presidio is both a Spanish and Mexican establishment, half barracks and half jail for refractory soldiers and unfortunate convicts.

of May, 1767, to the Count of Fuentes, the ambassador of Spain at Versailles :

“ Ulloa arrived at New Orleans only on the 5th of March, 1766. He did not then take possession, for the motives already explained. The Duke of Praslin\* will recollect that there were doubts on our part, as to the acceptance of the donation tendered by his most Christian Majesty. But, as the same reasons which had made France believe in the necessity of the cession prompted Spain to accept it, the king gave it his assent, although it was well known that we were acquiring nothing but an annual incumbrance of two hundred and fifty to three hundred thousand dollars, in consideration of a distant and negative utility—which is—that of possessing a country to prevent its being possessed by another nation.

“ After all, there never was any stipulation as to the time when Spain should take possession of Louisiana, and it ought not to be a matter of astonishment, if we have not been in a hurry to do so, because, if the colony is profitable, we have been the sufferers by the delay ; and if not, what reason could we have to change our ordinary way of proceeding, and to run after an onerous burden. This, sir, is the cause of our surprise at the Duke of Praslin’s insinuation, that we may be called upon to pay all the expenses of the colony, from 1763, when the cession was made. France would have as good grounds to ask us to pay all her expenses in Louisiana since its foundation. What makes this pretension still more singular is, that, from the date of the cession to Ulloa’s arrival at New Orleans, it is France which has had the absolute enjoyment of all the commercial advantages of that colony, which advantages she con-

\* One of the French Ministers.

tinues to enjoy to the present day, when the expenses of administration are no longer hers. Not a single Spanish vessel has as yet gone to Louisiana with a cargo of merchandise. So far, that trade is monopolized by French ships. Would it be just that France, when reaping all the profits that the country can afford, should require of us to pay the expenses which had been incurred before Spain had set her foot in that new possession?

“The King, always ready to avoid causing the least prejudice to the interests of the Most Christian King, his cousin, although knowing from the beginning that the colony was an unprofitable charge, although Mr. de Ulloa was prevented from taking possession of it through the want of co-operation of the French troops, on which we had been led to believe that we could rely, and although all the commerce of the colony has not ceased to be in the hands of the French, the King, I say, has declared, that he would assume all the expenses incurred since Ulloa’s arrival.”

Towards the end of the year 1767, Jean Milhet returned from France, whither, it will be recollected, he had been sent as a delegate by the colonists, in 1765, to remonstrate against the treaty of cession of Louisiana. His long absence had contributed to feed the hopes of his fellow citizens, who supposed that he would not have remained away so long a time, if he had not seen a fair prospect of success in his mission. But when, on his return, he put to flight all the illusions with which they had deluded themselves, their exasperation reached its climax, and they did not fear to give to Ulloa an open manifestation of all their aversion for the Spanish domination.

Thus closed the year 1767. The 17th and 18th of

January, 1768, were the two coldest days that had ever been known in Louisiana. All the orange trees perished a second time throughout the colony, as in 1748. In front of New Orleans, the river was frozen on both sides, thirty and forty feet from its banks.

The rigor of the season did not divert the attention of the inhabitants from the main calamity which was impending over them, and the thermometer of agitation was daily rising in the colony. There seemed to be a fixed determination to construe into an offence everything that Ulloa could say or do. His manner of living, his tastes, his habits, his conversations, the most trivial occurrences in his household, were interpreted so as to keep up the excitement; and the estrangement between the people and their new governor had become complete.

Ulloa was a man of the most amiable dispositions, but he was of that nervous, excitable temperament, which is said to be the attribute of those who consecrate their days and nights to study. He, who had associated with Newton, with Folkes, La Condamine, Voltaire, and the most distinguished men of the age, he, whose society was courted in the most polite circles of Europe, found himself suddenly thrown into an uncongenial atmosphere, and soon discovered that he was very little appreciated by those whom he had been sent to govern. His desire to please was met with cold repulse; his plans to benefit were not understood; the expression of his determination to correct certain abuses, was tortured into threats of oppression and into an invasion of established rights. Even the superiority of his high intellectual and moral qualifications unfitted him to be the welcome guest which he otherwise might have been. His sense of rectitude revolted at many things, on which he commented perhaps in terms too

severe, and he was thought to be harsh and cruel. Averse to convivialities and to worldly amusements, a man of spare habits, he had little in common, as to tastes and pursuits, with those among whom he had come to live; and as he allowed his indifference to fellowship with them to become visible, and, as in several instances, when surrounded by the magnates of the land, he had been observed to be moody and abstracted, he was reported to be supercilious and haughty. At times, when interrupted in his favorite studies, to listen to some petty grievance or some trivial application, he had received the intruder with some peevishness of manner, or with cutting sarcasm, and hence he was said to be ill tempered and prejudiced. Ulloa could not but be alive to the painfulness of the situation in which he was placed; and the injustice with which he was treated made him perhaps unjust to others. He had been goaded into contempt for the colony and its inhabitants; and, conscious of his worth, he took very little pains to conceal that he considered himself as being very much out of his element in Louisiana. Placed amidst a poor and illiterate community of a few thousand souls, in a country hardly redeemed from its primitive character of a wilderness, he had very little space left for the range of his great native and acquired powers of intellect. Therefore, he may well be supposed to have felt the agonies of a mind, used to expansion without limits, then suddenly confined within the narrowest possible space, and to have realized the existence of the fair spirit of the air, which, as we read of in fairy tales, a hostile magician had corked up in a bottle. Hence he was soured into discontent and lived in retirement waiting for better times.

But to those who frequented his house, as retainers

or friends, he showed himself to the best advantage, and excited their warmest admiration. Three times a week, he threw open his saloons, where, about the same visitors, few in number, used to assemble. There was not above a score of the colonists and of the French officers who ventured to attend on these occasions. They were those who did not fear to abstain from showing hostility to the Spanish Governor, and who had thereby made themselves obnoxious to the majority of the inhabitants, and to their brother officers who pursued a different course. Thus Aubry, Bellevue, Vaugine, Roche, Populus de St. Protais, Grand-Pré, Grand-Maison, Olivier de Vezin, Reggio, De Lachaise, Dreux, Maxent, and others, had, by their attendance at Ulloa's house, the moral courage to show openly their adhesion to the Spanish government. Foucault, the Intendant Commissary, would occasionally appear, but as it was well known that his sympathies were on the side of the opposition, he came, as it were, in his official capacity only, was received as such with cold formality, and as, under such circumstances, he could not help laboring under some degree of embarrassment, he would soon relieve himself by never remaining long in an atmosphere in which he did not feel at ease.

On these evenings, the late Marchioness of Abrado, now the Señora de Ulloa, was the centre of attraction. To great personal beauty she joined a cultivated mind, the accomplishment of musical talent, and the fascination of manner of the high bred lady. On Ulloa's return to Spain, she became an object of admiration at the court of Madrid. But, in Louisiana, she had shared the unpopularity of her husband, and few of the French ladies in the colony had paid her the respectful attentions and civilities to which she was entitled. The aver-

sion entertained for her husband, her very rank, her wealth, the other advantages which she possessed, and which, probably, were too many things at once to be forgiven and forgotten, had perhaps contributed to produce the feeling of alienation that was exhibited in her regard. This feeling the Señora de Ulloa had made no efforts to overcome, and had even given it more intensity, by appearing provokingly indifferent to the solitude in which she was left by those of her sex. Nay, she unconsciously provoked resentment and passionate abuse, by showing herself in public, attended by several young Indian girls whom she had brought over with her from Peru, whom she delighted to fondle as pets or favorites, and whom she treated almost with that kind of familiarity which is used only towards equals. Owing to this circumstance, much blame was thrown upon her in the colony for *keeping low company*, as it was said, and for associating with *mulatresses*. The haughty smile and the merriment with which the aristocratic lady received this report, when carried up to her ears, gave still deeper offence to the community.

No man could be more entertaining than Ulloa, in his moments of relaxation. He was sprightly and even playful, and his conversation was a rich mixture of humorous wit and deep learning. As a man who had made himself famous by his travels, he had an inexhaustible fund of observations on the countries and nations with which he had become familiar; and as one who had left no field of science unexplored, he brought to bear even on the most commonplace topic such a variety of knowledge, that he clothed with interest what did not seem to admit of any. His favorite position was to stand up at the mantel corner of the fire-place, and there, with his hands behind his back, his eyes sparkling, and



his face beaming with animation, he gathered round him and kept, as it were fettered by a spell, a group of admiring listeners. He was a man of middle stature, stooping a little, with pale cheeks, thoughtful brow, limbs thin and spare—in a word—the very prototype of the lover of the midnight lamp.

As a matter of course, all the Spanish functionaries and officers were present on these occasions. Of them the most conspicuous were: Loyola, the Commissary of War and Intendant, Gayarre, the Contador, or Royal Comptroller and Auditor, Navarro, the Treasurer, Pier-nas, the commander of the two companies of foot that had come with Ulloa, and d'Acosta, the Captain of the frigate which had transported the Spanish Governor to the colony, and which had ever since remained in the river. They were men of merit, and by their urbanity of manner and various accomplishments, they contributed their share to the pleasantness of the passing hour.

On the 20th of January, 1768, Aubry wrote to his government: "I am still waiting for the arrival of the Spanish troops, without which it is absolutely impossible that Ulloa should take possession of the colony. In the meantime, the affairs are conducted as much as possible as if it had been effected.

"But I am in one of the most extraordinary positions. I command for the king of France, and, at the same time, I govern the colony as if it belonged to the king of Spain. A French commander is gradually moulding Frenchmen to Spanish domination. The Spanish Governor urges me to issue ordinances in relation to the police and commerce of the country, which take the people by surprise, considering that they are not used to such novelties. This colony is an instrument which it is ne-



cessary to take to pieces and to remodel, so as to make it play to the Spanish tune. The Spanish flag is now waving at the extremities of the province. It is at the Balize, at Missouri, on the bank of the Iberville river, and opposite Natchez. Mr. de Ulloa has just established these four posts, and has distributed among them the ninety soldiers that came with him. This operation was executed peaceably, without any accident, and has produced no change in our posts, which still continue in existence as in the past, so that, in all those which are on the banks of the Mississippi, from the Balize to Illinois, the French flag is kept up as before.

“It is no pleasant mission to govern a colony which undergoes so many revolutions, which has not known, for three years, whether it is Spanish or French, and which, until Spain shall take formal possession, is, to speak properly, without a master. When that event shall happen, I shall feel authorized to say to Mr. de Ulloa, that I deliver into his hands a Spanish colony, considering the changes and novelties which I have introduced in concert with him, during its French administration.

“It seems to me that Mr. de Ulloa is frequently too punctilious, and raises difficulties about trifles. We sometimes dispute about things which are clear and just beyond any possible doubt, and about which there would be no discussion even between two private individuals in a state of poverty.” With regard to Ulloa, he was so well pleased with Aubry, that, on his recommendation, the Spanish government made to that officer a present of three thousand dollars.

Two-thirds of the year, 1768, had passed away in apparent quiet. But a secret conspiracy had been kept alive in the town of New Orleans and in the neighbor-

ing parishes, to drive away the Spaniards from the colony. The chief conspirators were some of its most influential men, such as: Lafrénière, the king's Attorney-General, Foucault, the Intendant Commissary, Masan, a retired captain of infantry, a wealthy planter, and a knight of St. Louis, Marquis, a captain in the Swiss troops enlisted in the service of France, Noyan, a retired captain of cavalry, and Bienville, a lieutenant in the navy, both the nephews of Bienville, the founder of the colony, Doucet, a distinguished lawyer, Jean and Joseph Milhet, Caresse, Petit, and Poupet, who were among the principal merchants, Hardy de Boisblanc, a former member of the Superior Council and a planter of note, Villieré, the commander of the German Coast.

Lafrénière was a native of Louisiana, and of an obscure family. His father, a poor Canadian, who had followed Bienville to Louisiana, had, by dint of industry, acquired some fortune, and had sent his son to be educated in France. A plebeian by birth, Lafrénière had the majestic aspect of a king, so much so, that he had been nicknamed Louis XIV. He was a man of strong passions, expensive tastes, and domineering temper. He was gifted with considerable eloquence, bordering, it is true, on the bombastic, but well calculated to produce an impression on the masses. His ambition was unbounded, and was supported by an indomitable energy. He had those qualifications of mind, soul and temperament, which, under different circumstances, will, however paradoxical it may appear, make a man feel and act, truly and honestly to himself and to others, either as an intense aristocrat, or as an impetuous demagogue, a devoted tribune of the people—that being whom Shakspeare calls : “*the tongue of the common mouth.*” This was the man who was the acknowledged leader of the anti-Span-

ish party, and his efforts had been incessant to pave the way to the contemplated insurrection.

A secret association had been formed, and the chiefs of the conspiracy used to meet, either at Masan's house, or at a house situated out of the precincts of the town, but contiguous to it, which belonged to one Mrs. Pradel, who was the avowed mistress of the Intendant Foucault. This house was surrounded by a large garden, thickly shaded with those magnificent trees which are the pride of Louisiana. There the conspirators used to resort at night, one by one, from different directions, and discussed the plans they had prepared. There, after the dangerous occupation for which they had met was over, they sauntered in the perfumed alleys of roses, myrtles and magnolias of their fair associate in the partnership of conspiracy, and then they ended the evening in merriment and in the enjoyment of a luxurious banquet. This circumstance puts one in mind of the meeting, as related by Alfred de Vigny, of young Cinq-mars and his friends, at the house of the faithless courtesan Marion de Lorme, when that unfortunate favorite of Louis XIII. dared to head a conspiracy against the omnipotent and all-seeing minister, Cardinal Richelieu. But the secret of this conspiracy was better kept than that of the one to which I have alluded, and Aubry and Ulloa were not informed of it, before the 25th of October, when it was too late and all was ready to insure success.

The Germans and Acadians had been long tampered with, and Ulloa having lately sent Maxent with bags of dollars, to pay these people for grain and other provisions which the Spanish government had bought, and of which the payment had been delayed, the conspirators became apprehensive that this circumstance would operate unfavorably for them on these Germans and

Acadians, whom they had persuaded that their claims would never be acknowledged and settled. Therefore, when Maxent stopped at the house of D'Arensbourg, the old Swedish captain, who, it will be remembered, had come to the colony in 1721, after having distinguished himself at the battle of Pultawa, and who was one of the most respected inhabitants of Louisiana, he was arrested by Verret, under the authority of Villeré, who commanded at the German Coast, and all the government money was taken away from him. A capuchin, who was the curate of that settlement, had been one of the most active tools of the conspirators, and, by circulating every kind of exciting rumors, had powerfully helped them in inducing the Germans and Acadians to rise against the Spaniards.

On the 27th, Foucault convened a meeting of the Superior Council for the next day. During the night, the guns which were at the Tchoupitoulas gate were spiked, and the next morning, on the 28th, the Acadians, headed by Noyan, and the Germans by Villeré, entered the town, armed with fowling-pieces, with muskets, and all sorts of weapons. The planters who lived below New Orleans, also forced its gates and joined the other confederates. Marquis had been appointed commander-in-chief of the insurgents, and immediately assumed the duties of his new office. The town became the theatre of fearful alarm and confusion. The Spanish frigate broke the bridge which connected her with the bank of the river, and moved off to cast anchor in deeper water. The rumor that she was going to fire at the town produced the wildest excitement. All the private and public houses closed their doors, and heavy patrols of the insurgents, who were completely masters of New Orleans, paraded through its streets.

Aubry took with great celerity and energy all the necessary measures to protect the Spaniards, and to save Ulloa from injury. He had cartridges distributed to his men, who numbered only one hundred and ten, the rest being scattered throughout the colony in its different posts, and had them ready for action. He assembled their officers, and told them that he would die, rather than suffer that a hair should be touched on Ulloa's head, and that he relied on their zeal and fidelity. He sent for Lafrénière, and urged him to desist from an enterprise which would be his perdition and the ruin of the colony; he told him that he would oppose it with force and arms, and that a great deal of blood would be shed. Seeing that he could not change Lafrénière's resolution, he added: "Well, sir, remember that the chiefs of a conspiracy have always met with a tragical end." He sent also for Foucault, and asked him what side he would take. On Foucault's answering with his usual ambiguity, Aubry told him that he would ruin himself beyond redemption, if he did not oppose so atrocious a rebellion. But he could not prevail on Foucault to pursue any decided course. His appeals to the other leaders were equally fruitless. In the evening, seeing that, to use his own expressions, *all was in a state of combustion*, he waited on Ulloa, and, informing him that he could not answer for his life, requested him to retire with his wife on board of the frigate of his Catholic Majesty. He then accompanied the Spanish Governor to that place of security, and left with him an officer and twenty men.

On the first appearance of danger, Gayarre, Loyola, Navarro, and the other few Spaniards who were in the town, with some of their French adherents and friends who had showed themselves true in the hour of trial,

had gathered round Ulloa to die with or save him. They had barricaded his house, and put it in such a state of defence as would have enabled them to stand a siege, and to sell their lives dearly. After Ulloa's retreat to the frigate, they remained in the same position, expecting to be attacked at every moment, and continued in that state of imminent danger and anxious suspense during four days. Occasionally, the people would come rushing on, as it were to storm the fortifications which had been got up on the spur of the moment, and, uttering fierce shouts, would, with wild gestures, heap abuse on the Spaniards and their king, and deafen their ears with loud hurrahs for the King of France. But, on every one of these occasions, some of the chiefs among the insurgents, who seemed determined to keep the people from committing any unnecessary outrage, appeared among them, and by their exhortations induced them to abstain from deeds of violence, and to act with that magnanimity which the consciousness of vast superiority of force ought to inspire. They assured them that the Spaniards would retire without resistance, and thereby succeeded, every time, in drawing them away from the spot to which they were but too often recalled by their excited passions. Besides, it was evident from the most cursory survey, made even by an unmilitary eye, of the preparations visible in what might be called the little stronghold of the Spaniards, that, with the unyielding temper which is the so well known attribute of their race, they had made themselves ready for the most desperate struggle. This, also, contributed perhaps to ward off the threatened blow. The following passage in Aubry's letter to O'Reilly, when rendering an account of these events, shows how great the danger had been: "Several times," said he, "the party of the rebels and

that of the Spaniards, which certainly was not the strongest, were near coming to blows. Should that misfortune have happened, your Excellency would now be treading on the ashes of New Orleans."

In compliance with Foucault's convocation, the Superior Council had met at eight o'clock on the morning of the 28th. The members present were: Foucault, Lafrénière, Huchet de Kernion, De Launay, and Laplace, the rest of the council being absent for the alleged cause of sickness. Caresse was then introduced, and presented a petition signed by about six hundred planters, merchants and others, demanding the restoration of some liberties and ancient rights, the granting of new privileges, and the expulsion of Ulloa and of the other Spanish officers. This petition, which is said to have been written by Lafrénière and Doucet, was not read, but was referred to Huchet de Kernion and De Launay, with instructions to report on the following day. On the proposition of Lafrénière, who represented that there would not be a full council at the next meeting, on account of sickness among the members, and that it was impossible to delay action on a matter of so much importance, it was determined that supernumerary members of the council be appointed. On the joint recommendation of Foucault and Lafrénière, Messrs. Hardy de Boisblanc, Thomassin, Fleuriau, Bobé, Ducros, and Labarre were elected, and a resolution was passed, inviting them to be present at the meeting of the 29th.

The petition presented to the Superior Council for the expulsion of Ulloa had been signed in a large assembly, which had taken place early on the 28th, and which had been addressed with great vehemence by Lafrénière, Doucet, Jean and Joseph Milhet.



On the 29th, the Superior Council met at nine o'clock in the morning, to take into consideration that petition. To back it, the insurgents, to the number of about one thousand, were assembled on the public square, round a white flag which they had hoisted up in its centre, and declared that they would exterminate all the Spaniards and their adherents, if the decree of expulsion should not be issued, because they were determined to submit to no other government than that of France. The Superior Council, composed of thirteen members, before deliberating, inquired of Aubry, through its president, whether Ulloa had exhibited to him his powers to take possession of the colony in the name of the King of Spain. Aubry answered that nothing very decisive had ever been shown to him on the subject. Then the Attorney-General rose and said :\*

“Gentlemen : the first and most interesting point to be examined, is the step taken by all the planters and merchants in concert, who being threatened with slavery, and laboring under grievances which have been enumerated, address your tribunal, and require justice for the violations of the solemn act of cession of this colony.

“Is yours a competent tribunal? are these complaints just?

“I shall now proceed† to demonstrate the extent of the royal authority vested in the Superior Council. The parliaments and Superior Council are the depositaries of the laws, under the protection of which the people live happy ; they are created and organized to be, from the very nature of their official tenure, the sworn patrons of

\* See all the proceedings in the Appendix.

† The peculiarities of Lafrénière's style have been preserved in the translation as much as possible.



virtuous citizens ; and they are established for the purpose of executing the ordinances, edicts and declarations of kings, after they are registered. Such has been the will and pleasure of Louis the well-beloved, our liege Lord and King, in whose name all your decrees, to the present day, have been issued and carried into execution. The act of cession, the only title of which his Catholic Majesty's commissioner can avail himself, to make his demands *auctoritate et proprietate*, was addressed to the late Mr. D'Abbadie, with orders to cause it to be registered in the Superior Council of the colony, to the end that the different classes of the said colony may be informed of its contents, and may be enabled to have recourse to it upon occasion, that instrument being calculated for no other purpose.

“Mr. Ulloa's letter, dated from Havana, July 10th, 1765, which expresses his dispositions to do the inhabitants all the services they can desire, was addressed to you, gentlemen, with a request to make it known to the said inhabitants, that, “in thus acting, he would only discharge his duty and gratify his inclinations.” The said letter was, by your decree, after full deliberation, published, set up and registered, as a pledge to the inhabitants of happiness and tranquillity. Another letter of the month of October last, written to Mr. Aubry, proves that justice still continues to be administered in the colony in the name of Louis the well-beloved. It results from the solemn act of cession and its accessories, that the planters, merchants, and other inhabitants have the most solid basis to stand upon, when they present you with their most humble remonstrances ; and that you, gentlemen, are fully authorized to pronounce thereupon. Let us now proceed to a scrupulous examination of the act of cession, and of the

letter written by Ulloa to the Superior Council. I think it likewise incumbent on me to cite, word for word, an extract of the King's letter, which was published, set up and registered.

“This very solemn act of cession, which gives the title of property to his Catholic Majesty, secures for the inhabitants of the colony the preservation of ancient and known privileges; and the royal word of our sovereign Lord the King promises, and gives us ground to hope for, others, which the calamities of war have prevented him from making his subjects enjoy. The ancient privileges having been suppressed by the authority of his Catholic Majesty's commissioner, property becomes precarious. The act of cession, which was the mere result of good will and friendship, was made with reserves which confirm the liberties and privileges of the inhabitants, and which promise them a life of tranquillity, under the protection and shelter of their canon and civil laws. As property accruing from a cession by free right cannot be claimed and obtained, except on the condition of complying, during the whole possession of said property, with the reserves contained in said act of cession, our sovereign Lord the King hopes and flatters himself that, *in consequence of the friendship and affection shown by his Catholic Majesty, he will be pleased to give such orders to his governor, and to other officers employed in his service in that colony, as may be conducive to the advantage and tranquillity of the inhabitants, and that they shall be ruled, and their fortunes and estates managed according to the laws, forms and customs of said colony.* Can Mr. Ulloa's powers give authority to ordinances and orders which violate the respect due to the solemn act of cession? The ancient privileges, the tranquillity of the subjects of France,

the laws, forms and customs of the colony are rendered sacred by a royal promise, by a registering ordered by the Superior Council and by a publication solemnly decreed and universally known. The sole aim of the letter of our sovereign Lord the King, was to grant to the different classes of the colony a recourse to the act of cession. Therefore, nothing can be better grounded or more legal than the right of remonstrating, which the inhabitants and citizens of the colony have acquired by royal authority.

“Let us proceed to an examination of the letter of Mr. Ulloa, written to the Superior Council of New Orleans, dated the 10th of July, 1765. I shall here cite, word for word, the article relative to the Superior Council and the inhabitants:

*“‘I flatter myself, beforehand, that it will afford me favorable opportunities to render you all the services that you and the inhabitants of your town may desire—of which I beg you to give them the assurance from me, and to let them know that, in acting thus, I only discharge my duty and gratify my inclinations.’*

“Mr. de Ulloa proved thereby the orders which he had received from his Catholic Majesty, conformably to the solemn act of cession, and manifested a sentiment which is indispensable in any governor who is desirous of rendering good services to his king in the colonies.

“Without population there can be no commerce, and without commerce no population. In proportion to the extent of both, is the solidity of thrones; both are fed by liberty and competition, which are the nursing mothers of the State, of which the spirit of monopoly is the tyrant and step-mother. Without liberty, there are but few virtues. Despotism breeds pusillanimity and deepens the abyss of vices. Man is considered as sinning

before God, only because he retains his free will. Where is the liberty of our planters, our merchants and our other inhabitants? Protection and benevolence have given way to despotism ; a single authority would absorb and annihilate every thing. 'All ranks, without distinction, can no longer, without running the risk of being taxed with guilt, do any thing else but tremble, bow their necks to the yoke, and lick the dust. The Superior Council, bulwark of the tranquillity of virtuous citizens, has supported itself only by the combined force of the probity and disinterestedness of its members, and the confidence of the people in that tribunal. Without taking possession of the colony, without registering, as was necessary, in the Superior Council, his titles and patents, according to the laws, forms and customs of the colony, and without any exhibition of the act of cession, Mr. de Ulloa has caused a president, three counsellors and a secretary, nominated for the purpose, to take cognizance of facts which belonged to the jurisdiction of the Superior Council, and in which French citizens were concerned. Often did discontents and ~~disgusts~~ seem to force you to resign your places, but you have always considered it as a duty of your station of counsellors to the Most Christian King, to alleviate and calm the murmurs of the oppressed citizens. The love of your country, and the sense of the justice due to every citizen who applies for it, have nourished your zeal. It has always been rendered with the same exactness ; although you never thought proper to make representations on the infractions of the act of cession. You have always feared to give encouragement to a mass of discontented people, threatened with the most dreadful calamities ; you have preferred public tranquillity. But now, the whole body of the planters, mer-

chants, and other inhabitants of Louisiana apply to you for justice.

“Let us now proceed to an accurate and scrupulous examination of the grievances, complaints and imputations contained in the representations of the planters, merchants and other inhabitants. What sad and dismal pictures do the said representations bring before your eyes! The scourges of the last war, a suspension to this day of the payment of seven millions of the King's paper money, issued to supply the calls of the service, and received with confidence by the inhabitants of the colony, had obstructed the ease and facility of the circulation, but the activity and industry of the planter and of the French merchant had almost got the better of all difficulties. The most remote corners of the possessions of the savages had been discovered, the fur trade had been carried to its highest perfection, and the new culture of cotton, joined to that of indigo and tobacco, secured cargoes to those who were engaged in fitting out ships. The commissioners of his Catholic Majesty had promised ten years of free trade—that period being sufficient for every subject of France attached to his sovereign Lord and King. But the tobacco of this colony being prohibited in Spain, where those of Havana are the only ones allowed, the timber (a considerable branch of the income of the inhabitants) being useless to Spain, which is furnished in this article by its possessions, and the indigo being inferior to that of Guatimala, which supplies more than is requisite to the manufactures of Spain, the returns of the commodities of the inhabitants of this colony to the Peninsula became a ruinous trade, and the inhabitants were delivered up to the most dreadful misery. His Catholic Majesty's commissioner had publicly declared his conviction of

the impossibility of this country trading with Spain ; all patronage, favor and encouragement were formally promised to the inhabitants ; the title of protector was decreed to Mr. Ulloa ; the hope and the activity necessary to the success of the planter were nourished by the faith and confidence reposed in these assurances of the Spanish governor.

“ But by the effect of what undermining and imperceptible fatality, have we seen a house, worth twenty thousand livres, sold for six thousand, and plantations, all on a sudden, lose one-half and two-thirds of their intrinsic value ? Fortunes waste away, and specie is more scarce than ever ; confidence is lost, and discouragement becomes general ; the plaintive cries of distress are heard on every side ; the precious name of a subject of France is in an eclipse, and the fatal decree concerning the commerce of Louisiana gives the colony the last fatal stroke which must lead to its total annihilation. The Spanish flag is set up at the Balize, at the Illinois, and other places ; no title, no letters patent were presented to the Superior Council ; time flies apace ; the delays fixed for the liberty of emigration will soon expire, force will tyrannize, we shall be reduced to live in slavery and loaded with chains, or precipitately to forsake establishments transmitted down from the grandfather to the grandson. All the planters, merchants and other inhabitants of Louisiana call upon you to restore them to their sovereign Lord the King Louis the well-beloved ; they tender to you their treasures and their blood to live and die French.

“ Let us proceed to sum up the charges, grievances and imputations.

“ Mr. de Ulloa has caused counsellors, named by himself, to take cognizance of facts concerning French sub-

jects, which appertained only to the jurisdiction of the Superior Council. The sentences of that new tribunal have been signified to, and put in execution against, Mess. Cadis and Leblanc. Mr. Ulloa has supported the negroes dissatisfied with their masters. He has exhibited to the Superior Council none of his titles, powers and provisions, as commissioner of his Catholic Majesty; he has not exhibited his copy of the act of cession, in order to have it registered; he has, without the said indispensable formalities, set up the Spanish flag at the Balize, at the Illinois, and other places; he has, without legal authority, vexed, punished and oppressed subjects of France; he has even confined some of them in the frigate of his Catholic Majesty; he has, by his authority alone, usurped the fourth part of the common of the inhabitants of the town, has appropriated it to himself, and has caused it to be fenced in, that his horses might graze there.

“Having maturely weighed all this, I require in behalf of the King:

“That the sentences pronounced by the counsellors nominated for the purpose, and put into execution against Mess. Cadis and Leblanc, subjects of France, be declared encroachments upon the authority of our sovereign Lord the King, and destructive of the respect due to his supreme justice, seated in his Superior Council, inasmuch as they violate the laws, forms and customs of the colony, confirmed and guaranteed by the solemn act of cession.

“That Mr. de Ulloa be declared to have violated our laws, forms and customs, and the orders of his Catholic Majesty in relation to the act of cession, as it appears by his letter, dated from Havana, on the 10th of July, 1765.



“That he be declared usurper of illegal authority, by causing subjects of France to be punished and oppressed, without having previously complied with the laws, forms and customs ; in having his powers, titles and instructions registered by the Superior Council, with the copy of the act of cession.

“That Mr. Ulloa, commissioner of his Catholic Majesty, be enjoined to leave the colony in the frigate in which he came, without delay, to avoid accidents or new clamors, and to go and give an account of his conduct to his Catholic Majesty ; and with regard to the different posts established by the said Mr. Ulloa, that he be desired to leave in writing such orders as he shall think necessary ; that he be declared responsible for all the events which he might have foreseen ; and that Mess. Aubry and Foucault be requested and even summoned, in the name of our sovereign Lord the King, to continue to govern and administer the colony as heretofore.

“That all ships sailing from this colony shall not be despatched without passports signed by Mr. Foucault, as intendant commissary of his Most Christian Majesty.

“That the taking possession of the colony can neither be proposed nor attempted by any means, without new orders from his Most Christian Majesty.

“That Mess. Loyola, Gayarre and Navarro be declared guarantees of their signatures, on the bonds which they have issued, if they do not produce the orders of his Catholic Majesty, empowering them to issue said bonds and papers ; and that a sufficient time be granted them to settle their accounts.

“That the planters, merchants and other inhabitants be empowered to elect deputies, to carry their petitions and supplications to our sovereign Lord the King.

“That it be resolved and determined, that the Supe-



rior Council shall make representations to our sovereign Lord the King; that its decree, when ready to be issued, be read, set up, published and registered.

“That collated copies thereof be sent to his Grace the Duke of Praslin, with a letter of the Superior Council, and likewise to all the posts of the colony, to be there read, set up, published and registered.”

Then Mess. Huchet De Kernion and Piot De Launay, to whom the petition of the colonists had been referred, having made their report, the whole being duly weighed and deliberated upon, the attorney-general having been heard and having retired, the Council proceeded to frame its decree.

Every one of the thirteen members gave his opinion separately, and in writing. Hardy de Boisblanc, during the deliberations, was observed to be one of the most violent advocates of the expulsion of Ulloa. Aubry, who had put his handful of men under arms, and who had been very active in every part of the town, to maintain order as much as possible, and to prevent the out-breaking of popular passion into deeds of blood, presented himself before the Council, and remonstrated against the decree, which, he was informed, they were going to adopt. He called their attention to the consequences of what they were doing, and to the magnitude of the affair of which they presumed to take cognizance. He told them that they had no jurisdiction over the case on which they were preparing to decide, that Ulloa was the commissioner and representative of a great king, and that they would provoke the resentment of their Most Christian and Catholic Majesties by sending him out of the colony. But seeing, he said, that neither prayers nor threats could produce any impression, except on two or three, who seemed to be moderate, and that the rest

allowed themselves to be swayed by the sentiments of Lafrénière, he desisted from his vain attempts.

At 12 o'clock, the Superior Council adjourned, after having, with Foucault's exception, agreed on their decree. It was in conformity with Lafrénière's conclusions, which were all adopted, and almost in the very words he had used. The time allowed Ulloa to quit the colony, was only three days, and he was to depart, either in the frigate of his Catholic Majesty in which he had come, or in whatever other vessel he should think proper. Loyola, Gayarre and Navarro were permitted to remain to settle their accounts, but were made personally responsible for the bonds and papers they had put in circulation, unless they showed their authority to emit them under the special orders of his Catholic Majesty. In conclusion, the Council said: "We order all our bailiffs and sergeants to perform all the acts and formalities requisite for carrying the present decree into execution; we at the same time, empower them to do so. We also enjoin the substitute of the King's attorney-general, to superintend the execution, and to apprise the court thereof, in due time.

"Given at the Council chamber, on the 29th of October, 1768."

Foucault, who had been, under ground, one of the most ardent firebrands of the insurrection, and who had secretly goaded on the conspirators in every step they had taken, faithful to the plan he had followed, to shelter himself against any future contingencies of danger, to save his responsibility, and to insure his safety, by not breaking into any open and palpable act of rebellion, on the plea that, as the French King's intendant, he was restrained, and forced to a great deal of caution by his official position, and that, by appearing not to be en-

tirely with his associates, he could afford more real and effective aid to their cause, gave his opinion in writing, as follows:

“The intention of the King, our master, being that the colony should belong, fully and without reserve, to his Catholic Majesty, by virtue of the treaty of cession, my opinion is that none of the Spanish officers who have come here by order of their government, can be legally sent away; that, considering the causes of discontent enumerated in the petition of the citizens, and Ulloa’s omission to take possession of the colony with the usual formalities, he, the said Ulloa, should be prohibited from exercising the powers of Governor, in anything relating to the French subjects now in Louisiana, or who may come thereto, hereafter, either as colonists or not; and that everything appertaining to the commerce carried on by the French and other nations with this colony, be regulated as it was before his arrival; nevertheless, that all the officers of the Spanish administration should continue their respective functions, in order to provide for the supplies necessary to the town and to the posts, for the payment of all salaries, and for the expenses of the French troops which will continue to serve, and of the works which will be deemed proper; this, until the decision of the courts of France and Spain be known, reserving to the delegates of the people the right to address his Catholic majesty in the most respectful and lawful manner, in order to obtain the privileges they claim.”

Aubry, with his characteristic energy and frankness of behavior, without hesitation or equivocation, protested against the proceedings of the Council in these terms:

“I protest against the decree of the Council which

dismisses Don Antonio de Ulloa from this colony. Their most Christian and Catholic Majesties will be offended at the treatment inflicted on a personage of his character; and though I have so small a force subject to my orders, I would, with all my might, oppose his departure, were I not apprehensive of endangering his life, as well as the lives of all the Spaniards in the colony.

“Delivered at the Council chamber, on the 29th of October, 1768.”

At 2 o'clock P. M. the decree of the Superior Council was officially communicated to Ulloa on board of the frigate, and to the assembled insurgents. “The most intense enthusiasm,” said the Council in a letter to the French government, “followed this information, when given to the people. Women and children were seen rushing to the post which supported the French flag, and kissing it with passion; the air was rent with thousands of cries of: *Long live the King! Long live Louis the well-beloved!* What a glorious moment, sire, for so great a monarch!”

On the adjournment of the Council, its members had been invited by Foucault to dine at his house. They took their seats at the table, at 2 o'clock, and at five, whilst they were enjoying the last course of the banquet, Noyan and some others entered the room, and, addressing Foucault and Lafrénière, begged them to prevail on the Council to visit the barracks, where all the planters, merchants and other colonists were assembled. Coffee,\* to close the convivial festivity, was immediately called for, and then, at the request of Foucault and Lafrénière, the Council, in a body, with the exception of Messrs. Lalande d'Apremont and Huchet de Kernion,

\* See the written deposition of Garlic, the Clerk of the Council, on the trial of Lafrénière and others.

who said that they were sick, and retired, proceeded to meet the insurgents, by whom they were welcomed with loud acclamations, and the welkin rang with tumultuous and prolonged cries of: *Long live the King of France! Long live Louis the well-beloved!* These cries were responded to and repeated by the Council in a body. From the barracks, the Council, followed by some citizens of note and consequence, went to Aubry's house. There, both Foucault and Lafrénière addressed him, and requested him to resume the government of the colony in the name of the King of France. Aubry again reproached them with what they had done, and said that they would soon see his prophecies realized.

Some reflections present themselves to the mind, in reviewing Lafrénière's address to the Council. It is apparent that he had assumed false and untenable grounds, and he must have known them to be such, when he argued in the Council, that the treaty of cession was with conditions and reserves, that the letter of Louis XV. to D'Abbadie was binding on the King of Spain, and that it secured in law to the colonists their ancient rights and privileges. It is equally evident that it was by the most forced construction that he interpreted into an acknowledgment of those rights Ulloa's letter to the Council, which this officer wrote from Havana, giving notice of his coming, and which contained nothing but empty and vague expressions of civility, usual on such occasions. Foucault was therefore right when he said, that the treaty of cession was absolute, that the officers of the King of Spain could not be legally dismissed from the colony, and that, if the colonists were oppressed by those officers, their only course, save the inalienable right of revolution in cases of extreme hardship, was to apply to his Catholic Majesty for redress. But,

in his desire to pursue a middle course and to keep on terms with both parties, he fell into a state of contradiction and inconsistency. To invite and to allow Ulloa to pay all the French functionaries and the French troops, and to assume all the expenses of the colony, was to invite and to allow him to be its governor. He could not, except as such, perform what he was requested to do, and the public functionaries, as soon as they accepted the pay of Spain, ceased to be French and became Spanish. The French troops, from the moment that they were supported by the Spanish treasury, had virtually passed into the service of Spain, and owed obedience to the Spanish governor. Thus Aubry, having consented that Ulloa should assume all the expenses of the colony, acted logically in executing the mandates of that officer, and in behaving only as his lieutenant. It was too late to allege the want of the formality of taking possession and of the vain parade of a public ceremony, when that possession had been effectually superseded by the fact of the colony being entirely supplied, in all the wants of its administration and in every thing else, out of the Spanish treasury, with the consent and invitation of all. Ulloa's authority could not be partially admitted; it was impossible not to reject or to recognize it in its integrity. Therefore, Foucault's recommendation to retain Ulloa in the colony, as merely a French paymaster, and to deprive him of all authority as a Spanish governor, seems to be almost ludicrously incoherent. The fact is, that the colonists had achieved a revolution, and had by force of arms annulled the treaty of cession made between France and Spain. Foucault forgot that, on such occasions, men must have the courage of acknowledging the paternity of their acts; that, as a revolution cannot be disguised, it had better

be proclaimed ; and that it is a futile attempt to reconcile with the existing political organization and laws, and to defend in their name, what is frequently their manifest disruption and violation, and a return to the reserved and natural rights of man.

There is a passage in Lafrénière's address, of which Louisiana may well be proud, and of which she can boast, as spoken by one of her children, in 1768, before the voice of 1776 was heard. "In proportion," said he, "to the extent both of commerce and population, is the solidity of thrones ; both are fed by liberty and competition, which are the nursing mothers of the State, of which the spirit of monopoly is the tyrant and step-mother. Without liberty there are but few virtues. Despotism breeds pusillanimity, and deepens the abyss of vices. Man is considered as sinning before God, only because he retains his free will." To appreciate this bold language, it must be remembered that it was officially uttered by the attorney-general of an absolute King, and that it was intended to reach the ears of the despotic government of France.

Another passage of Lafrénière's address must be commented upon in justice to Ulloa. It must be observed that he said : "His Catholic Majesty's commissioner had publicly declared his conviction of the impossibility of this country trading with Spain. All patronage, favor and encouragement were formally promised to the inhabitants ; the title of protector was decreed to Mr. Ulloa ; the hope and activity, necessary to the success of the planter, were sustained by the faith and confidence reposed in these assurances of the Spanish governor." This shows what spirit had animated Ulloa on his arrival in Louisiana. His enlightened mind had immediately discovered all the wants of the colony, and it

had cost him no effort to be convinced that it was laboring under fatal commercial restrictions. He had expressed himself to that effect, and had promised his intercession with his government. He had kept his word, and had made remonstrances which had been disregarded. Instead of inviting, he had deprecated, the commercial decree which had been sent to him from Madrid, which he had been bound to put in force, and which had produced so much discontent. It was therefore with great injustice that, in this instance, he had been charged by the inhabitants with duplicity and wanton tyranny.

But whatever had been his faults, his virtues, the merits and demerits of his deeds, his connection with Louisiana, as governor, had now ceased for ever.



## FIFTH LECTURE.

AUBRY'S REFLECTIONS ON THE LATE REVOLUTION—THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL ANNULS HIS PROTEST AGAINST THEIR DECREE—ULLOA'S LETTER TO AUBRY—CIRCUMSTANCES OF ULLOA'S DEPARTURE—MEMORIAL OR MANIFESTO OF THE COLONISTS IN THEIR JUSTIFICATION—THE COUNCIL APPOINTS A COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY IN RELATION TO THE ACCUSATIONS BROUGHT AGAINST ULLOA, AND ON WHICH HIS EXPULSION HAD BEEN BASED—DEPOSITIONS OF THE WITNESSES—THE COUNCIL'S LETTER TO THE DUKE OF PRASLIN—THEIR REPRESENTATIONS TO THE KING—COMPOSITION AND NATURE OF THE NEW TRIBUNAL ESTABLISHED BY ULLOA—FOUCAULT'S LETTER TO THE DUKE OF PRASLIN—AUBRY'S TO THE SAME—ULLOA'S ARRIVAL AT HAVANA—HIS LETTERS TO THE MARQUIS OF GRIMALDI ON THE REVOLUTION AND THE SITUATION OF THE COLONY—PETITION OF THE COLONISTS TO THE COUNCIL, PRAYING FOR THE EXPULSION OF THE SPANISH FRIGATE, THE VOLANTE—THE COUNCIL'S DECREE ON THE SUBJECT—FOUCAULT'S DESPATCHES TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT—HIS TREACHERY—AUBRY'S OPINION OF ULLOA AND OF THE CONSPIRATORS—HIS WISHES AND VIEWS EXPRESSED TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT—THE NEWS OF THE REVOLUTION REACHES SPAIN—DELIBERATIONS OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS—SPAIN DETERMINES TO RETAIN POSSESSION OF LOUISIANA—LETTER OF THE MARQUIS OF GRIMALDI ON THE SUBJECT TO THE COUNT OF FUENTES, AMBASSADOR OF SPAIN AT THE COURT OF VERSAILLES—GENERAL O'REILLY IS SENT TO LOUISIANA WITH FULL POWERS TO PUT DOWN THE INSURRECTION, AND TO TRY THE REBELS—DOUBTS AND ANXIETIES IN THE COLONY—BEGINNING OF A REACTION AGAINST THE CHIEFS OF THE REVOLUTION.

On the 30th of October, 1768, Aubry sent to one of the ministers in France a detailed statement of all that had occurred, and said of the Superior Council: "Seeing that I could not oppose what they had resolved upon, and that their minds were made up, I protested against their decree which orders the expulsion, within three days, of him whom his Catholic Majesty had sent to take possession of the colony. I look upon this action as one of the greatest outrages that could be committed. If a dozen individuals, who had contributed not a

little to set all on fire, had been spared the country, that event would not have happened. It is my duty to inform your excellency that, although it is the universal wish of the colonists to remain French, and although they protest their fidelity to the King of France, yet every thing is *topsy turvy*. It is desired that I remain governor, and Mr. Foucault intendant. But violence is the order of the day. Much apparent respect is shown to me, but I am not obeyed. Having no troops at my disposal to enforce my authority, it is reduced to a mere shadow, and my person and the dignity of my office are both degraded."

This despatch was intrusted to De Lapeyrière, a Knight of St. Louis, whom Aubry sent to France, to give all the information that might be wanted in relation to the late revolution. The insurgents lost no time in selecting their delegates to carry their representations to the foot of the throne. Lesassier was appointed by the Superior Council, Bienville, a Lieutenant in the navy, by the planters, and Milhet by the merchants. Bienville having refused, on the ground that his military commission was incompatible with the mandate for which he had been chosen, St. Lette was put in his place.

With regard to Ulloa, he was preparing to leave the country within the time which had been allotted to him, and he wrote to Aubry, to authorize him to withdraw the Spanish troops from the posts which they occupied, and to send them to Havana. "*He has even been so generous,*" said Aubry, "*as to order the Spanish commissary to continue to pay the French troops and their officers.*"

On the 31st of October, the Council met again, and annulled in the following terms Aubry's protest:

“Having taken into consideration the protest made by Mr. Aubry, Knight of the royal and military order of St. Louis, governor of this province for his Most Christian Majesty, in relation to the decree of court delivered on the 29th of the present month against Mr. Ulloa, commissioner of his Catholic Majesty; and this protest being read whilst the audience was holding, and the King’s attorney-general being heard thereupon, and the matter thoroughly debated, the Council, without condemning the motives which have caused Mr. Aubry to protest against the decree of the 29th of the present month, has declared and declares the said protest null and void, and orders that the said decree shall have its full force and entire effect, and shall be executed according to its form and tenor.

“Deliberated upon and registered at the Council Chamber, October 31, 1768.”

On that day Ulloa wrote to Aubry: “No reproaches can be addressed to me; for, if I had forts constructed, or gave any other commands, it was with your advice and consent, and with the approbation of the King, my master, to whom the colony belongs; and your excellency being the Governor-general of said colony, to whom was directed the edict of his Most Christian Majesty declaring the cession, the Superior Council, which is nothing but a civil tribunal, has nothing to do with it.”

In the evening, Ulloa embarked with all his family in a French vessel which he had chartered, because he could not, as was alleged, depart in the Spanish frigate, which needed repairs. On the 1st of November, at the dawning of light, a numerous band of colonists, who had spent the preceding night at a wedding, and who were probably laboring under the ordinary effects of a

festivity of this kind, appeared on the bank of the river, where the French vessel was moored, and indulged in the singing of patriotic songs and in the uttering of shouts of exultation. One of them, named Petit, cut the ropes which made fast the vessel, and the joyous band had the satisfaction to see her go down the stream. But she stopped at a short distance, and did not sail before the afternoon, in presence of the sergeants and bailiffs of the Council, who reported thereupon to that body. Marquis had ordered fifty men of the militia on board of a boat, to accompany, as far as the mouth of the river, the vessel which was to carry away Ulloa, and had instructed them to garrison the fort at the Balize, with the view to oppose any Spanish force that might come. These men had already embarked, when Aubry commanded them to desist from their enterprise and to land, under pain of being fired at. "*On that occasion,*" said he, in one of his despatches, "*I was obeyed for the first time.*"

After the expulsion of Ulloa, the planters and merchants of Louisiana put forth a memorial or manifesto in justification of the revolution of the 28th of October, which was published by Braud, the King's printer, with the authorization of Foucault, the intendant commissary. It repeats all that had been said by Lafrénière in his address to the Council, and although containing further allegations and being more developed in its arguments, it seems to have been written by him, and certainly bears the stamp of his style. It begins with expressing the deep regrets of the colonists at being threatened with the loss of so beneficent a master as Louis XV., who is for his subjects the *image of God on earth, and an incomparable monarch*—the *most august of sovereigns*, under whose cherished sway it is the wish of the col-

onists to live and die, and they tender the remnants of their broken fortunes, their blood, their children and their families, to remain under the paternal rule of Louis *the well-beloved*. They also bestow exaggerated praise on the prime minister, Duke of Choiseul, and seem to forget, or not to be aware, that he was the very man who had transferred them to Spain.

Among the other heads of accusation which they bring against Ulloa, they complain of his having granted to five or six persons the exclusive privilege of trading with the Illinois district, and they also refer to the restrictions on commerce imposed by the famous decree of the 6th of September, 1766. They accuse him of the violation of *fair promises made on his arrival*, of an *antipathy to humanity*, and of a *natural disposition to do evil deeds*. In support of which, they mention his closing all the passes of the Mississippi, except one, which he chose precisely because it was the most shallow, the most difficult, and the most perilous; his ordering the pilots not to pass the night on board of any vessel coming to, or going out of the Mississippi, and his causing thereby many accidents and great damages; the sending of honest and respectable citizens to the mines, and other acts of vexation and tyranny; the sequestration of goods; the establishment of a new tribunal, in violation of the rights and jurisdiction appertaining to the Superior Council; his interfering with the importation of negroes; his ordering a brick-yard to be abandoned, on the ground that it was too close to the fortifications of the town, and because the holes which the negroes dug, to supply the kiln with earth, became full of putrid water, which, he said, corrupted the air, notwithstanding the assertions of physicians to the contrary; his treatment of the Acadians, whom he threat-

ened to sell as slaves; his negotiating with an Englishman the setting at liberty of four Germans detained on board the Spanish frigate, in consideration of the payment of fifteen dollars per head; his haughtiness, his love of money, his sordid avarice; his contempt for the ecclesiastical laws of the colony, his absence from the French churches, and his having Mass said in his own house. They allege that he had the sacrament of marriage administered under his own roof by his chaplain, to a white man and a black female slave, without the permission of the curate, without the requisite previous publications, without any of the forms or solemnities established by the church, in contempt of the decrees of the Council of Trent, and against the precise directions of the civil and canon laws which governed the colony.

“Is there anything reprehensible,” they said, “in the step to which we have been driven by Mr. de Ulloa’s conduct, and by the vexations to which it led? What harm have we done in shaking off a foreign yoke, which was made still more heavy and crushing by the hand which imposed it? What offence have we committed in claiming back our laws, our country, our sovereign, and in consecrating to him our everlasting love? Are such laudable attempts without an example in our history? Have not more than one city in France, such as Cahors and Montauban, and even whole provinces, such as the Guerci, the Rouergue, and Gascony, repeatedly broken with patriotic rage the English yoke, or refused to be fettered by foreign chains? Solemn compacts, treaties of cession, and even positive orders from our kings often attempted in vain to accomplish what British arms could not achieve, although smiled upon by victory; and that noble resistance to the decrees of our natural

born sovereigns, far from kindling their wrath, stirred up the fountain of their paternal attachment, forced them into helping their loving subjects, and thus wrought out their deliverance."

After having given the reasons why the colony of Louisiana could not be of any advantage to Spain, they proceeded to enumerate those which ought to induce France to retain a possession that was calculated to indemnify her for the loss of Canada.

"The remaining of this colony in the hands of France," so they argued, "is a better security and guaranty for the provinces of Spain bordering on Louisiana, than the cession made to that crown. The unfavorable impressions already conceived by the Indians against the Spanish nation, and which have prompted them, not only to insult, but also to threaten with great violence the Spanish Captain Rici, who commands at the Illinois, would, in case of war, enlist them in the ranks of any power hostile to Spain. On the contrary, the Indian tribes always side with the French soldiers, without inquiring who their enemy is. This is the true bulwark for Spain. Since she cannot find any advantage in the acquisition of this immense possession, and since it is beyond doubt that, from our limited commerce with her, we could not expect any thing beyond the bare support of our existence, why should the two sovereigns agree to make us miserable, for the sole pleasure of doing it? Such sentiments do not enter the hearts of kings, and it would be a crime to entertain any such supposition. \* \* \* \* \*

"Scrupulous observers of the respect due to crowned heads, and of the mutual considerations of amity which civilized nations ought to cherish, we should feel deeply grieved, if we had lost sight of them in what we have



done. There is nothing offensive for the Court of Madrid in the exposition of our wants and in the assurances of our attachment, which we lay at the feet of our august Sovereign. We dare hope that these demonstrations of our zeal will contribute to show to all the nations of the earth, how true is the appellation of *well beloved*, which the whole world gives to him, and which no other monarch ever did possess. Perhaps, even in Madrid it will be said: *Happy the prince, our ally, who finds the inviolable attachment of his subjects to his domination and to his glorious person, an obstacle to his treaty of cession!*

“We are aware that the commissioner of Spain took before his departure, and still continues to gather, through his emissaries, certificates from certain individuals residing among us, who are his mercenary clients, seduced by brilliant promises, and who are looking out for proselytes, by persuading the ignorant and frightening the weak. But whatever may be the contents of those certificates, which are not very authentic, they never can deny what is of public notoriety and contradict the voice of the people. \* \* \* \* \*

“It is to his beneficent Majesty that we, the planters, merchants and colonists of Louisiana, address our most humble prayers, that he may immediately resume possession of the colony; and being resolved to live and die under his dear domination, as well as determined to do all that may be required for the success of his arms, the extension of his power, and the glory of his reign, we supplicate him to deign to preserve to us our patriotic name of Frenchmen, our laws and our privileges.”

The whole of this long document is interesting, as representing the manners, the sentiments, the passions,



feelings and talents of the time, but it is a confused mixture of truths and errors, and is written in very defective style. It must be remarked in connection with it, that, with regard to the monopoly of trade granted by Ulloa in the Illinois district, it had been already established by D'Abbadie in 1764, and that such grants had been so frequent since the foundation of the colony, that its inhabitants must have been accustomed to the system, and that it could not be anticipated that they would resent so acutely its continuation, wrong as it certainly was. As to the hyperbolical expressions of inviolable attachment and unshakable devotion for the glorious person of Louis XV., of Louis *the well-beloved*, it may be permitted to wonder at the foundations on which rested such sentiments. Such was not the judgment of France herself on this degraded prince, who, without a feeling of remorse or shame in his royal breast, had allowed her to be stript of her magnificent colonies; which extended without interruption from the mouth of the Mississippi to that of the St. Lawrence, and who, instead of using her treasures in carrying on a glorious war, and in defending her immense American domains, lavished them away among vile flatterers, flung them in the lap of ignoble courtezans, and wasted his long and worthless life amidst the orgies of a corrupt court and the impurities of that famous seat of debauchery, called the *Parc aux cerfs* and imagined for his special benefit, without caring probably, and perhaps without knowing, in what part of America Louisiana was situated, and certainly without conceiving that beyond the Atlantic there were men who regretted his domination.

The Superior Council had begun with decreeing at once the expulsion of Ulloa, and six days after his de-

parture, they ordered an inquest in relation to the misdeeds of which this officer was accused. It seems that this should have been the first thing to be done. A committee of inquiry was appointed, composed of Huchet de Kernion and Piot de Launay. The witnesses, heard, corroborated some of the assertions made by Lafrénière in his address to the Superior Council, and those that were set forth in the memorial of the planters and merchants in justification of the revolution of the 28th of October, and, in addition, they certified to these other facts: That Ulloa had caused several children afflicted with leprosy to be seized, and, notwithstanding the supplications of their parents, had the cruelty to send them to the Balize where none of their wants were supplied; that he had forbidden slaves to be whipped in New Orleans, in order to please his wife, whose humanity was shocked by their cries, so that the inhabitants, much to their prejudice, were obliged to go six miles out of the town to have their slaves punished; that for his own personal convenience, he had encroached on a street, which he had reduced to a width of sixteen feet, and that he had thought proper to block up one of the gates of the town, still for his own personal gratification.

Among other curious depositions, is that of the reverend Father Dagobert, vicar-general and curate. He swears that the only causes of reproach he has against Ulloa are the following: that he, Ulloa, had caused the sacrament of marriage to be administered in his own house by his chaplain, without the previously required publications, and without the usual formalities; and that he, Father Dagobert, has been assured that the persons thus married were a white man and a black woman. The witness declares that the marriage took

place without his consent. He adds, that Ulloa had assumed the right of having a chapel in his own house, that he had mass said in it for eighteen months by the chaplain of the frigate; and furthermore, that there was no decent place for the establishment of said chapel in said house. The deponent affirms that the Señora de Larredo, Marchioness of Abrado, having arrived from Peru at the Balize, where Ulloa had gone to await her, the said Ulloa had carried her up in triumph to New Orleans, pretending to have married her at the Balize, where the nuptial benediction had been administered to them by the chaplain of the frigate, but without the permission of the deponent, and without the required publications, said chaplain having, besides, never been authorized to celebrate marriages in the province. Father Dagobert concludes saying, that this marriage has caused much scandal in the town, has alarmed timorous and scrupulous consciences, and that it is believed to be clandestine, on account of the want of compliance with the civil and canon forms and laws.

On the 22d of November, the Superior Council addressed to the Duke of Praslin a letter, in which they begged him to support the representations they sent to be laid at the foot of the throne. In this letter, they recapitulated all the grievances of the colonists against Ulloa, dwelling on the tyranny, eccentricity, and inflexible temper of that officer, and the excessive indecency of his deportment. They said: "The court could not without a violation of its oath to support the laws, and without being recreant to the most essential obligations imposed by religion and humanity, refuse to a whole colony, groaning under its miseries, the justice which it claimed with so much earnestness against the oppression of that officer. In fulfilling its duty in that respect, the

Council certainly prevented the commission of a striking act of despair, which would have tarnished the lustre of the French name. Under the influence of these motives, the Court rendered against that officer a decree, of which a copy is forwarded to your Excellency." To this letter was annexed the document containing the representations which were to be laid before the King, in the name of the Council.

In those representations the Council made the most seductive description of the prosperity of the colony at the time of the cession, a description which it is impossible to look upon as corresponding with facts. But with Ulloa, as they affirmed, came the most disastrous change in the situation of the province. "*He arrived at the Balize,*" they said, "*on the 22d of February, 1766; a tragical event deprived him of eleven of his sailors. Rain, thunder and a storm introduced him to the inhabitants of New Orleans, on the 5th of March, at noon.*" After mentioning these bad omens, they recapitulated the grievances which have already been stated, and made to them some additions, for instance: That Ulloa maintained that he was the king of the colony; that he treated with the utmost contempt the Superior Council, whose powers he wished to destroy, and violated all those rights which had been secured by the treaty of cession and the King's letter to D'Abbadie; and that he carried the infraction of the most sacred privileges so far as to create a new council, which had, among other powers, exclusive jurisdiction over all questions connected with the regulations or decrees on exportation, importation and other commercial matters. The sentences rendered by that tribunal were annexed to the petition, in order that the King might judge of their illegality. The Superior Council further alleged that

three Acadian families, having arrived in the colony at their own expense, asked Ulloa for leave to buy land in the vicinity of their relations and friends in the upper part of the Mississippi river; but that Ulloa, irritated by the cries of their children, by the critical state of a woman who was on the eve of becoming a mother, and by the representations of the men, forbade their remaining in the colony, and had them put on board of an English ship sailing for New England; and that he declared his intention to sell as slaves other Acadians, who had dared to make some humble representations to him; that the subjects of France were threatened with slavery, whilst negroes were raised by degrees to the dignity of freemen; that he hastened to show his antipathy to the population of the colony by sending to Havana for a nurse for his child, in order that it might not suck one drop of French blood. "*What pernicious principles are these!*" they exclaimed. "*What barbarous dispositions!*"

They further represented that, through the misdeeds of Ulloa, the colony had been thrown into such a state of destitution, that half of it was reduced to live on rice and corn; and that, without the wise precautions of Foucault, who had a certain quantity of these articles of food brought down to New Orleans, fathers and mothers would have had, even in the capital, nothing to offer but tears to the plaintive cries of their famished children; that the people became persuaded that Ulloa rejoiced at the success of his attempts to starve them, and that he was determined to reduce the subjects of France to have no other food than the tortilla;\* that a general feeling of despair pervaded the colony; that all the colonists, deprived of their ordinary aliments, were condemned to

\* In Spain, a dish of eggs, and in Mexico, of corn flour, fried in oil or lard, in the round shape of a pie.

fatten vampires with their life blood, and that, by a malicious and restrictive legislation, they were prevented from acquiring the means of paying their old debts. The Superior Council then proceeded to relate the events which preceded the revolution, those of the revolution itself, and what had followed. They concluded with supplicating the King to retake possession of the colony, and annul the treaty of cession.

“Your Majesty,” they said, “will find in all the citizens brave soldiers, who offer to shed their blood and sacrifice their fortunes to protect the Mexican provinces of Spain and to support your allies, provided they belong only to you, Sire, their most honored Lord and King, Louis the well-beloved. O great King, the best of kings, father and protector of your subjects, deign, Sire, to receive into your royal and paternal bosom your devoted children, who have no other desire than that of dying your subjects. It is the wish of this colony. Your Superior Council has thought it their duty to convey the expression of it to Your Majesty. Deign, Sire, to ward off from your subjects new misfortunes. Their hearts are lacerated, and bleeding from the wounds inflicted by tyranny and despotism. The benefits conferred by the best of kings can alone, Sire, make your people happy. Those who are accustomed to the blessings of a government which is envied by all the other nations, will never be able to subject themselves to the system of exclusiveness and to the despotism which prevail in all the Spanish possessions. Men are born under laws which become gradually familiar and dear to them, in proportion as from childhood they grow into manhood, when their attachment to them can no longer be destroyed. Men who have reached the meridian of life cannot, of their own free will, remold their character,

their heart, their honest and time-honored habits. It can only be accomplished by force. What a modification of their existence does it require! What a struggle, Sire, for citizens who are born the subjects of such a King as Louis the well-beloved! Deign again, Sire, listen with favor to the general wish of the colony, and to the most humble representations of your Superior Council."

This address to the King is in a tone of exaggeration which must have weakened the effect it was intended to have. It was not in the temperate language which characterizes truth; but it seemed rather to have been written under the influence of the deepest feelings of anger and hatred. None can believe that *it was the intention of Ulloa to deprive the new subjects of his Catholic Majesty of their ordinary articles of food, and to reduce them to live on nothing but the tortilla.* It was natural to infer that those who could hold it as a heinous crime in Ulloa, to *have given a Spanish nurse to his child*, were too prejudiced or too irritated to see things in their true light, and to make a fair report on what had occurred. There were good grounds for suspecting them of swerving from truth, perhaps involuntarily and unconsciously, in their allegations. The fact is, that there might have been some just reproaches to be addressed to Ulloa, but that his faults were far from being as serious as they were represented to be.

With regard to the new tribunal established by Ulloa, and which was the cause of so many bitter complaints, as usurping the powers of the Superior Council, it was composed of three Spaniards: Loyola, the commissary of war; Don Estevan Antonio Gayarre, the contador or royal comptroller; Don Jose Melchoir d'Acosta, the commander of his Catholic Majesty's frigate, and four Frenchmen: Reggio, a retired captain of infantry; Oli-



vier de Vezin, chief surveyor of the colony; De La Chaise, an honorary member of the Superior Council, and Dreux, a captain of militia. It held its sittings in the house of Destréhan, the ex-French treasurer of the colony.

With the Superior Council's address to the King, there went at the same time a letter from Foucault to the Duke of Praslin, in which he justified as well as he could, but in very guarded language, the revolution that had taken place, and in which he said of Ulloa: "Without taking possession of the colony, and even without exhibiting his credentials, he arrogated all powers to himself. He was very harsh and absolute, of extremely difficult access, and refusing to listen to every representation. He showed without the least hesitation or equivocation an implacable hatred for the French nation, and marked every day that he passed here with acts of inhumanity and despotism." He then goes into the details of all his exertions to prevent the expulsion of Ulloa, and declares that it originated in the many causes of irritation and provocation which the people had; he says that he harangued them several times to induce them to remain quiet, and affirms, in direct contradiction of Aubry's declarations in one of his despatches, that, on the breaking out of the insurrection, he joined his efforts to Aubry's in order to tranquillize the public mind. He concludes with saying that all the colonists hope to resume the privileges and name of Frenchmen, and that, rather than lose these precious advantages, they would quit the colony with their negroes, chattels, goods and all the other property susceptible of being carried away, leaving nothing but a desert to the Spaniards.

Three days later, on the 25th of November, Aubry wrote to the same minister: "I beg you, my Lord, to deign to cast your eye on a letter which I had the honor



to write to you, on the 30th of March, 1767. You will see in three different passages, that I foresaw the unfortunate event which has occurred. I had informed you that Mr. de Ulloa was not the proper person to govern this colony, notwithstanding his vast intellect, his talents, his learning, his great reputation in all the academies of Europe, and although he is full of honor, of probity and of zeal for the service of his sovereign. He does not possess the necessary qualifications to command Frenchmen. Instead of endeavoring to gain the hearts of the people (which is absolutely necessary in a change of government), he has done all that could tend to alienate them. He seemed to despise the first men of the colony, and particularly the members of the Superior Council. By his indiscreet expressions, and by threats which foreshadowed the forthcoming of a frightful despotism, he caused the Spanish domination to be dreaded, and gave rise to the supposition that he did not like our nation. He has alarmed everybody, and, by a deportment as unbecoming as it was surprising in a man of so distinguished a mind, he has not a little contributed to draw down upon himself and his nation the storm which has swept him away.

“In another letter of the 4th of April, 1768, I had the honor to inform you of the deplorable state and of the frightful misery to which this colony is reduced. The uncertainty about the ultimate fate of the French paper currency, the prolonged delays in the payment of the debts of his Catholic Majesty, who has assumed the expenses of the colony, the scarcity of specie, the insolvability of three-fourths of the debtors, a diminution in the value of lands and negroes and of every kind of property, amounting to a loss of two-thirds, the regret of passing under a foreign domination which inspires the peo-

ple with the apprehension of their being unhappy, the Governor's want of capacity to conciliate the affection and esteem of the inhabitants, the news of a decree rendered by his Catholic Majesty which deprives the colony of its commerce with the Islands and with France—all these motives united, and made still more powerful by the effects of the extreme destitution which has prevailed here for so long a time, and which increases daily, have at last goaded the people into desperation, and produced this fatal revolution, which would not have happened, had I had at hand only a body of three hundred men.

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“It would perhaps be dangerous, at this moment, to impress the culprits with too deep a sense of their offence and of the rigorous punishments to which they expose themselves. The vicinity of the English settlements requires that we should proceed with great caution. Otherwise, it is to be apprehended that despair might drive the insurgents into something still worse.

“I remain at the head of a colony which has been set topsy turvy by the late revolution, and in the midst of a people who, after looking upon themselves as Spaniards during three years, now detest that nation, and wish not to lose the character of French subjects. With the exception of the officers, whose conduct I cannot but commend, of a handful of old soldiers who have remained faithful, and of a small number of honest people who support me, the rest of the colonists, from the first to the last, wish to preserve the name, character and privileges of Frenchmen.”

In another despatch of the same date, Aubry informed the French government that the English had evacuated, in September, the posts of Natchez and Iberville, in con-

formity with the orders of General Gage, and that they had established their headquarters at St. Augustin, leaving only fifty men at Pensacola and twenty-five at Mobile. Aubry inferred that the object of the English was to concentrate their forces, in consequence of a certain agitation in New England, where had been cast the seeds of that revolution which was to break forth in 1776. "I was waiting only," said he, "for the arrival of the Spanish troops, to deliver up the colony, and to return to France to render an account of my conduct, when a general rebellion of the inhabitants of this province against the Spanish Governor and his nation, which it was not in my power to oppose, and which occurred on 28th and 29th of October, destroyed in a moment the work of four years, and all the dispositions which I had taken on behalf of the crown of Spain. An audacious petition, insulting to the Spanish nation, rebellious against the King of France, whose orders it set at naught, and signed by six hundred planters and other inhabitants was presented to demand Ulloa's expulsion," etc., etc.—Such being the light under which a French Governor considered this act of the colonists, it is not astonishing that the Spaniards should have looked upon it as a most heinous offence, and should have punished it accordingly.

Thus was the revolution accomplished. A population, which hardly numbered eighteen hundred men able to carry arms, and which had in its bosom several thousands of black slaves, whom it was necessary to intimidate into subjection, had rebelled against the will of France, had flung the gauntlet at the Spanish monarchy, and was bearding a powerful nation, whose distinguished trait of character did not consist in the forgiveness of injuries, particularly when her pride was wounded. With regard

to France, it was evident that it was vain to rely on her support, since it was the consciousness of her weakness which had compelled her to give up that colony, and to offer it to the King of Spain, who did not care to have it. Besides, should France have been disposed to assist the colonists, how could she withdraw the donation she had pressed upon Spain, without indemnifying her for her expenses in the colony, and without punishing the authors of an outrage to which she had exposed an ally, whose sole object, in accepting the donation of Louisiana, was to be serviceable to the donor ! The colonists had long since sent to France intelligent men as delegates, to urge upon the king their wish that the cession of Louisiana be rescinded ; and those delegates, on their return, must have informed them of the true state of things, and made it known to them how fruitless it would be to endeavor to force France into the resumption of a province which she considered as a burden, and whose expenses she could no longer meet, on account of the embarrassed situation of her finances. It is therefore impossible not to be astonished at seeing one of these delegates engaged in a conspiracy against the Spaniards, and not to wonder at the temerity of the colonists in attempting a revolution of which the direful consequences to them it was but too easy to foresee.

In the meantime, Ulloa had arrived at Havana, and, on the 4th of December, wrote as follows to the Marquis of Grimaldi, one of the ministers in Spain :

“There being a rumor, on the 28th of October, that the insurgents intended to attack my house during the night, and to take possession of all the effects of value which they might find in it, on giving me a receipt for them, in order to enable me to be reimbursed by the treasurers of his Majesty, as rebels generally proceed in

a case of insurrection, and having been warned also that they had resolved to do the same with the king's treasury, where they expected to find a capital of more than one hundred thousand dollars, and to attack the frigate of his Majesty, the *Volante*, in which they imagined also that there was money, and finally, that their intention was to get hold of the papers of the government, and particularly of my correspondence with your Excellency, I retired on board of the frigate, whither I carried along with me all these papers, in order to keep them safe from all danger.

“On the 27th, being made aware of what was brewing, I had taken all the measures which circumstances had permitted, to put the frigate in a state of defence, and to prevent that the King's flag be insulted. No attempt of the kind had been made on the 1st of November, when I embarked with all my household in a French ship for Havana, in conformity with the summons which had been addressed to me.

“On the 16th of November, I went over the bar at the mouth of the river, and arrived yesterday at Havana, after a very painful navigation, the result of a departure so precipitate as not to give me time to provide for any thing.

“I briefly related to the Governor of this place what had happened, and, in the evening of the same day, a council was held to deliberate on what it would be proper to do, in order to afford assistance to the Spanish and French troops in Louisiana. But it was impossible to come to any determination, on account of many difficulties which presented themselves. The day after to-morrow there will be another Council, to ascertain what remains to be done, and what would be most likely to meet the views of his Majesty. The last council was

composed of the Governor, of the Marquis of Rubi, lieutenant-general, and of Michel de Altariva, intendant of the army.

“My opinion was, that I ought to proceed on my way to Spain in the first vessel sailing from this port, not only to present your Excellency with a detailed account of what had occurred, and to solve the doubts and difficulties that may arise, but also to furnish your Excellency with the necessary informations to secure the accomplishment of his Majesty's views, either with regard to the principal chiefs of the rebellion, or on other points; for I am aware that, in such cases, it is very important to know well, not only the nature of the means to be employed, but also the time and the circumstances most opportune for their use. But those gentlemen were of a different opinion, and it seemed to them that it would be more prudent for me to wait for the commands of his Majesty, in order to execute what it might please him to decide in this affair, and they thought that the interval of four or five months which it would require to receive the instructions of his Majesty, would not be detrimental to his service.

“I therefore yielded to their sentiment, although with reluctance, considering that much time would have been gained, had I followed my first impulse, since it would have been as easy for me to go to Spain as to forward a letter.”

At the same time, he sent to the Marquis of Grimaldi a despatch containing a relation of the events of the 28th and 29th of October, and the following observations :

“I beg you to recall to your memory a letter which I wrote to you in March, 1766, a few days after my arrival in New Orleans, in relation to the character of

the inhabitants. What I communicated to you on the subject was founded on the preliminary information which Governor Aubry had given to me, and on a letter which I received from Mr. de Kerlrec, in which he gave me an abbreviated description of the colony, and pitied me much for having been sent to govern such a country; and, finally, on what I had experienced myself during the few days that had elapsed since my coming to this province, as well as on the liberty which the merchants had taken to present me with a kind of manifesto containing different articles, on each of which they asked me for a decision, in order that they might frame their measures accordingly. I sent to your Excellency a copy of that memorial, in order that you might know the audacity of the people with whom you would have to deal, who aimed at no less than forcing their sovereign to capitulate with them, and whose expressions, far from being respectful and supplicating, were imperious, insolent and threatening.

“About three months before the outbreak of the revolution, it was known that Mr. de Bienville, the brother of Noyan, and Mr. Masan, the son of the conspirator of that name, had gone secretly to Pensacola, through a canal on the plantation of the latter which communicated with lake Borgne, without its being ascertained what was the object of their voyage.

“About the same time, a Frenchman, who was a stranger in the colony, and who had come to take possession of certain property belonging to his nephews then in France, and minors, being exasperated at a decree which the Council had rendered against him under the dictation of Lafrénière, and witnessing my want of power to have done to him such justice as he thought he deserved, assured me that there were traitors in the



town, and that those traitors were persons intrusted with high powers, giving me to understand that they were the very persons who, to-day, make a figure at the head of the insurrection.

“ When the insurrection began to manifest itself, the persons who were not participators in it, and whose number was pretty considerable, loudly declared what had been the motive of Bienville and Masan’s visit to Pensacola, and the conspirators themselves did not hesitate to confess, that these emissaries had gone to solicit the assistance of the English governor-general, and to beg him to send troops to support the rebels after the breaking out of the insurrection. It seems that the Governor’s answer was not favorable. For the said Governor, having reflected maturely on that affair, sent them back without encouraging their designs.

“ It is proper that your Excellency should know that their plans underwent more than one modification, and that one of them was, as reported, to transform this colony into a republic, under the protection of England; but seeing that they could not obtain from her the assistance which they wished for, they came to the determination to rise without it, and to trample under foot the orders of their sovereign.

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“ Hence the origin of the conspiracy. It is proper that I should make you acquainted with the interests and the relations of the inhabitants among themselves, in order to give to every one his due.

“ The commissary Foucault has always kept up a scandalous connection with a certain widow called Pradel, living with her even when he resided in a different house, and frequently cohabiting with her on a plantation which borders on the upper precincts of New



Orleans. About the same time when Bienville and Masan repaired secretly to Pensacola, Madam Pradel went with Foucault to her plantation, the dwelling house of which is contiguous to the town, and there they spent their nights, coming to town only during the day. On the breaking out of the insurrection, it was publicly said that there were in that residence frequent suppers, at which were present Lafrénière, his relations, and the other conspirators, and that, after the convivialities were over, these men passed the rest of the night in the garden, where they had their conferences, so that it is not doubtful but that the blow was struck from that quarter.

"The captain of the German militia, called Villeré, is the brother-in-law of Lafrénière, and is married to the niece of D'Arensbourg, who commands at the German Coast. The captain of the Tchoupitoulas militia is an individual named Léry, who is Lafrénière's first cousin ; thus, the interests of Lafrénière are supported by the three companies of militia, commanded by his cousin, his brother-in-law and their relations ; so that, with mere pretences to induce the militia of the town to rebel, it happens that the whole colony is put in a state of insurrection at the voice of one single man.

"The uncle of Noyan and Bienville had come from Canada to govern Louisiana, and, among the common people he brought over with him, there were four brothers, of the surname of Leroy, who, afterwards, assumed different surnames in Louisiana, one causing himself to be called Lafrénière, the other Léry, the third, Beaulieu, and the fourth, Chauvin. These four Canadians were of so low an extraction, and had so little education, that they could not write, and had come with an axe on the shoulder to live on their manual labor. The sons of these men are now the chiefs and authors of the rebellion.

“In a letter which I had the honor to write to your excellency before the event of the rebellion, I had informed you of the precaution which I had taken to send Mr. Maxent with fifteen hundred dollars, to pay the Germans for the provisions which had been bought from them in order to supply the Acadians with food, because the conspirators had availed themselves of the pretext that this payment would never be made, with a view to induce these people to co-operate with them.

“On the day following Maxent's departure, Lafrénière and another individual, named Marquis, sent, early in the morning, Villeré and Verret in pursuit of Maxent, to arrest him and to prevent his delivering the money to the Germans, fearing, if they were paid, that the motive which had prompted them to join the rebels existing no longer, these people might withdraw from the conspiracy, and thus force the conspirators to give up their designs. Maxent arrived at the plantation of D'Arensbourg, for whom I had given him a letter, and when he delivered it to that gentleman, he found him so different from what he expected, that, notwithstanding the very old age of that officer, and the unequivocal proofs already received of his fidelity, he discovered in him a man who had entirely yielded to the persuasions of his relations, Villeré and Léry, who had arrayed himself in the defence of liberty, and who had resolved that he should neither be the subject of the King, nor that the colony should belong to his Majesty.

“Maxent was arrested by Verret, as he states in his declaration, at one Cantrelle's house, who is the father-in-law of another Verret, commanding the Acadians, and where he was exceedingly ill used. The same Verret, whose first name is André, has confirmed Maxent's declaration to Mr. de Sale, lieutenant of foot, who com-

manded the detachment given to me by the French governor for the protection of my person and my papers, on the 2d of November, when the vessel in which I had embarked was moored in front of the plantation of Madam D'Aunoy. Consequently it is proved by the detention of the person of Maxent, that a plot had been formed to seduce the province from its fealty to Spain, by preventing the execution of those measures which prudence had suggested, to remove the pretexts which were intended to be put in use.

“The same André Verret has declared to Mr. de Sale that, with regard to the order to arrest Maxent, he had received it from Villeré, Lafrénière and Marquis.

“Lafrénière and Foucault have availed themselves of the discontent caused among the merchants by the *commercial decree*. With regard to the Acadians and Germans, they were persuaded to come to town, to be paid what was due to them in reimbursement of their *Canadian bonds*. Accordingly they came unarmed, with their captains Judice and Verret. It was in town that arms were distributed to them.

“After the success of the rebellion, the Acadians, being discontented at their having been deceived, made reproaches to their chiefs, and complained of their not having been indemnified for their loss of time and for the damage they had incurred in abandoning their labors.

“The Germans were misled by their being made to believe, that they were threatened with tyranny, and by other false assertions, as well as by calumnies against the Spaniards.

“With regard to the great body of the inhabitants, they were driven by force and violence into this scheme of insurrection by the chiefs of the rebels.

“The Germans and the Acadians are nevertheless

guilty of ingratitude, because they had received nothing but benefits from the Spaniards. They were enticed away.

“If there was any scarcity of provisions, in 1766, it was the fault of Mr. Foucault alone, who neglected to procure them.

“The names at the bottom of the memorial of the planters, merchants, etc., etc., which I attribute to Lafrénière, were signed on a blank piece of paper, which was subsequently filled up. It bears the stamp of Lafrénière's style, which is easily detected. In that document are to be found those arrogant expressions, that superciliousness and that insolent freedom with which he is in the habit of declaiming against our nation, and of endeavoring to persuade the inhabitants to remain French.

“From the beginning I had clearly seen that this man would never be a faithful subject of the King, and that he would use all his powers of eloquence to inspire the rest of his countrymen with his sentiments, and your Excellency may remember that I gave you timely information of it, in 1766. At the same time and in the same letters, I informed your Excellency that Lafrénière was considerably in debt—so much so, that the whole of his property could not pay the obligations he had contracted in France. De Noyan, his son-in-law, Villeré, Milhet and the principal chiefs of the conspiracy are in the same position.

“It would entirely suit their convenience, that this colony should remain a French possession, that Lafrénière should be the head and the master spirit of the Superior Council, by which means, he, Lafrénière, would be able to defraud his baffled creditors, and to prevent his friends and relations from being ruined by their

own creditors, which would be the case, if they were compelled to pay their debts. Lafrénière had entertained the hope that, after the fall of the Spaniards, he would, with the other members of his family, be able to realize large funds, with which he would retire to France. Foucault's object was to keep up the colonial and commercial connection of France with Louisiana, in order that he might retain his office of counselor and commissary, as I have already informed your Excellency.

"It is not the first time that the seditious maxims of Lafrénière have caused troubles. If Mr. de Kerlerec, when he was Governor of this colony, passed over the intrigues and the practices by which this turbulent spirit then agitated the colony, it was because he was obliged to resist, at the same time, both this secret and intestine war and an open one from the English, so that he was not prepared to take efficacious measures to repress such disorders.

"Mr. D'Abbadie, his successor, experienced so much opposition and so many inconveniences from the same source, that he more than once laid his complaints before the court of France, and represented the risks to which the colony was exposed from the senseless ambition of a subject, who pretended to unite in his person all the powers of the government; and he earnestly insisted on the necessity of removing him from the office of Attorney-General, which had been given to him only for a limited time. If the court of France did not comply with his representations, it is because the cession of Louisiana having been made, it was deemed expedient to leave Spain to act on the reforms which might be thought necessary."

So much for Ulloa's views and self-defence. But his expulsion had not satisfied the insurgents, and, in the

month of December, they presented another petition to the Superior Council for the expulsion of the Spanish frigate. It was conceived in these terms :

“ Mr. Marquis, late commander of the fourth Swiss company, the chevalier De La Ronde, late lieutenant of foot, Le Breton, late guardsman in the King's household troops, all syndics\* of the planters and colonists of this province, Mess. Caresse and Braquier, syndics of the merchants of New-Orleans, represent : that the frigate which used to serve as a prison to the citizens oppressed by Ulloa, as an asylum to the slaves who rebelled against their masters, and which was but too evident a sign of the expiring freedom of navigation, that this very frigate continues to sport her flag in this harbor, where she seems to domineer; that the posts of Manchac, of Natchez and of the Illinois are still occupied by Spanish garrisons and commanders ; that the officers of his Catholic Majesty are no more disposed to depart than if this colony was under the rule of Spain, and that, so far, there is no apparent change in the frightful prospect of that foreign domination which has so much disquieted the inhabitants of this colony ; that, with regard to the Spanish frigate, it is not astonishing that her remaining in this port should have caused general discontent, considering that the recollection of the vexations which she caused in conformity with the orders of Ulloa, both in relation to the freedom of navigation and to that of the citizens, cannot but produce indignation, etc., etc., \* \* \* \*

“ Said petitioners proceed to represent, that the decree rendered by the court, on the 29th of October last,

\* A Syndic is the chief or headman of a corporation or community, of which he is a member, and with the management of whose affairs he is intrusted.

when it enjoined Mr. Ulloa to embark within three days, either in the frigate, or in such other vessel as he might choose, did also impliedly enjoin the officers of said frigate to make themselves ready to depart in a few days, and that if Mr. Ulloa was allowed to choose the vessel in which he was to sail, it is only because the court had presumed that the frigate was in want of some repairs to go to sea with security; that even a vague rumor had been spread, that Mr. Ulloa himself, before his departure, had ordered the officers of the frigate to have her promptly repaired, and then to leave the country for Havana without loss of time; that in fact, they had taken workmen almost immediately, but that their labors were conducted with excessive slowness; that the careening of that frigate seems to be the work of Penelope; and that there will be no end to it, if their diligence is not stimulated; that, according to the declaration of all the seafaring men of this port, she ought to have been ready a long time since, and that they would undertake to make her seaworthy in fifteen days.

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“Said petitioners further represent: That this slow proceeding has no tendency to produce tranquillity and general satisfaction; that devotedly obedient to the orders of his Most Christian Majesty, the colonists cherish and revere all that bears such a character; but that they hold in utter detestation all that can perpetuate to their eye the image of the Spanish authority, and the traces of the administration which Ulloa presented to them under so threatening an aspect, well seconded as he was by all those to whom he had delegated the slightest particle of the powers he assumed; that the petitioners have lately received sad news in relation to



those who have exercised those illegal powers ; that the merchants, Rivard and Bérard, who were going to Illinois, have been forced to land at the Arkansas, not to hear any longer the insulting language in which a certain Catalan, named Chouriac, who was sent by the Spaniards to Illinois as storekeeper and commissary, expressed himself toward the French nation ; that Piernas, the commander of the Spanish troops, when going with said Chouriac to the Illinois district, to assume its government, had met, at the *Ecores à Margot*, a boat which was coming down ; that said Piernas and Chouriac stopped her, and pressed out of her two rowers to increase their own crew, by threatening to fire at the boat with their swivel gun if they were not obeyed, and to put in chains the nine men who manned her ; that notwithstanding they could spare no one out of their small number, yet they drew lots to ascertain which of them would embark in the Spanish boat, in which they had nothing to expect but ill-usage ; that having attempted to stipulate for their wages, the said Chouriac told them that they must go to work for the service of the King without further discussion.

“The petitioners beg leave to state in addition, that this circumstance calls to mind another, which is not a less powerful demonstration of the evident tyranny already exercised by the officers acting under the command of Mr. Ulloa ; that these facts are related such as they happened, without the least passion or rancor ; and the petitioners ardently wish that the pure spirit of truth which guides their pen may open the eyes of some bad citizens, if, unfortunately, there should be any among them, whose base and venal souls are still wavering between the choice of liberty or slavery. Thus the petitioners represent, that Mr. Chamard departed last year



in his boat for Illinois ; that having stopped at Natchez, Mr. Piernas, the Spanish commander at that place, addressed one of the passengers on board Chamard's boat, and asked him for provisions, as he feared that he would soon be in need of them ; and this passenger answered that some might easily be procured at Pointe Coupée or elsewhere, adding that the boats bound from New Orleans to Illinois, far from being able to sell their provisions, were obliged to purchase some for their own use at all the posts established on the banks of the river ; that Mr. Piernas having retired, the men of the boat thought they had done with him, and that they were pushing from the shore, when suddenly Mr. Piernas had a piece of artillery loaded, to fire at the boat if she dared to leave the landing, and caused the alarum bell to be tolled, (the ordinary signal to take up arms,) collected his troops, and ordered Mr. de Lavillebeuvre to put himself at their head ; that this officer, notwithstanding the strong reluctance which he felt, was obliged to obey, and the provisions had to be delivered up to Piernas ; that there never was a specimen of more complete vexation and of bitter circumstantial violence ; that the natural inference is, that they, the colonists, must be looked upon by the Spaniards as galley slaves ; finally, that the haughty temper and tyrannical pretensions of that self-styled officer of his Catholic Majesty cannot but be the cause of unbounded indignation.

“The petitioners further represent, in their aforesaid capacities and character, that it falls within the province of the court to apply the remedy to the evil which they expose, and they do not hesitate to say, that the continuance of these vexations would convert the colony into a desert.

“Therefore they beg the Council to solicit from Mr.

Aubry's sense of justice, that he invite the captain of the Spanish frigate, the *Volante*, to hasten his departure in the interest of public tranquillity."

The Superior Council, on the conclusions of the attorney general, who supported the petition, rendered a decree in conformity with the prayer of the petitioners.

On the 23d of December, Foucault, continuing the part which he had so long been playing, of secretly instigating insurrection and of openly disclaiming all participation in it, nay, of apparently opposing the measures which he had provoked by underhand suggestions, wrote to his government:

"On the 9th inst. (December, 1768) the syndics of the planters, merchants and inhabitants of this colony handed to me a petition addressed by them in their official capacity, to the Superior Council, begging that the frigate of the King of Spain, which is moored at the quay of the town, together with the officers and other persons having titles or brevets from his Catholic Majesty, or commissions from Mr. Ulloa, the same having come with him or in other Spanish vessels, be compelled to withdraw from this colony within the shortest possible delay. I was aware of the vexations which had given rise to this demand, and they were so iniquitous, that I could not help blaming inwardly captain Piernas, the Spanish commander at Natchez, and Chouriac, whom Ulloa had sent as storekeeper and commissary to the Illinois district. But I was at first tempted not to lend a favorable ear to the petition of the colonists, because, in my opinion, the Superior Council could not grant what they prayed for, without going out of the bounds which it had prescribed to itself in its decree of the 29th of October last; and because to dismiss from the colony the vessels and the officers sent to it by his Catholic

Majesty, would be an infraction of the orders of our Sovereign, and because it seemed to me that it would be more proper to suspend any of those officers who should make an abusive use of their authority, and to account for our motives for so doing, &c., &c.

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“ But, for many reasons, I was obliged to convene the Council for the next day. It rendered an interlocutory decree, ordering a judicial investigation of the facts imputed to Piernas and Chouriac, to be reported upon as a basis for further proceedings.

“ On the 14th, the Council having met again to take into consideration the report, which contained the depositions of four witnesses, I gave my opinion in writing, and stated my reasons for strongly opposing any decree of expulsion, either against the frigate, or any Spanish officer. But the Council ordered that its decree of the 29th of October be carried into full execution, and begged Mr. Aubry to solicit the captain of the frigate to accelerate his departure in the shortest possible delay. It has also begged me to offer to that captain, and if accepted, to furnish him with any additional number of sailors, workmen, or whatever other things he might deem necessary to have, in order to enable him to quit the colony. I complied with the wishes of the Council on this subject, notwithstanding the reluctance which I felt, but only with regard to the sailors and workmen, because, with regard to provisions and other supplies, I had nothing which I could dispose of in the King's warehouses. I have the honor, my lord, to transmit to you, herein annexed, copies of the report of the committee of inquiry appointed by the Council on the charges brought against the Spanish officers, of the opinion which I gave in the Council, and of the decree of that tribunal.

“We shall take the command of the several posts established by Ulloa, in conformity with the request which he addressed to Mr. Aubry, and they shall be occupied by the French until we receive the orders which we have asked for. We have been for a month in possession of the post at the Balize. Mr. Aubry and myself have sent Mr. Andry, sub-engineer, to the posts of Iberville and Natchez, in order, jointly with the officers of his Catholic Majesty who command at these places, to draw and sign the plans and estimates of all the buildings, and make an inventory of all the artillery, provisions, ammunition, merchandise and other effects there to be found, in concert with those commanding officers and the storekeepers; to receive the whole into his custody, and to station at each of these points eight or ten Acadians, in the place of soldiers, whom it is impossible to send there, on account of the small number of them that are here.”

Foucault concludes with saying, that all the Spaniards are withdrawing from the other posts, and that it is agreed with them that, after the event of the 29th of October, the expenses of the colony shall, nevertheless, be supported by the King of Spain, up to the 31st of December next inclusively, and that the account shall be settled accordingly.

This despatch is another proof of the miserable shuffling to which Foucault resorted in all those transactions. His plan had been to show himself in his official acts as favorable to the insurgents as he possibly could, and to encourage them as far as he could go, without committing himself too much in the eyes of the French and Spanish governments. Thus he had affected to oppose the expulsion of the frigate and of the Spanish officers, and at the same time, he had recommended to suspend

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from their functions any of these very same officers who might be deemed guilty of an abuse of power. Yet to a man of his intelligence this dilemma must certainly have presented itself: the colony was either a Spanish, or a French province. If French, the colonists had the right, not only to prevent the Spanish officers from exercising their usurped functions, but also to expel them altogether, as intruders and trespassers. On the other hand, if Louisiana was a Spanish possession, and if, as Foucault maintained, the officers of his Catholic Majesty could not be driven away, whence did the colonists derive their authority, save from the right of revolution, to suspend them from their functions on the plea of abuses of power? Whence the right assumed by Foucault on behalf of the colonists, to account for so high handed a measure, not to the King of Spain, their new master, but to the late one, the King of France? These inconsistencies evidently proceeded from his desire to steer his bark safely between two opposite shoals.

On the very day when Foucault was writing the preceding despatch, Aubry, whose mind was sufficiently enlightened, and whose judgment was sufficiently calm, to foresee the fatal consequences of what had happened in Louisiana, and therefore whose anxieties were incessantly growing, communicated to the minister his reflections on the revolution which he had witnessed.

He wrote: "I find myself under the sad necessity of speaking, and of telling all, in spite of my reluctance to do so. The Council behaved badly. The attorney-general Lafrènière is one of the principal leaders.

"Mr. de Ulloa committed several faults, but never perpetrated crimes, and, setting aside his rank and his character, did not deserve the treatment which he underwent.

“It is necessary to send here a battalion and a new council. The one, to drive out of the country from ten to twelve firebrands, who rule it as they please, and are the causes of all the harm done; the other, to administer justice, which is almost entirely set aside.

“Should this revolution produce no change in the arrangements between France and Spain in relation to this colony, would it not be proper that his Majesty should transmit his orders here as soon as possible, and announce his ultimate and irrevocable will on the cession to Spain, promising pardon and oblivion, save to a few who are guilty, and whom it is absolutely necessary to punish? Besides, it is probable that the guiltiest will take refuge among the English, when they shall learn the arrival of the troops.

“It is much to be desired that the officer who may be sent by his Catholic Majesty to take possession of this colony, should have the necessary qualifications. If Mr. de Ulloa had been of a milder and more complaisant disposition, the colony would long ago have become Spanish; all would have remained quiet, and we should not be in the situation in which we are now. I assure you, my lord, that, but for me, he would have been sent away two years ago.

“It is desirable that, for some time, vessels be allowed to come here from France and from the Islands. It is the greatest benefit that his Catholic Majesty could confer on the inhabitants of Louisiana.

“Should the province remain to France, its inhabitants would be transported with joy. It would be the most agreeable news they could receive, as they generally have French hearts. But I am certain that, at present, they would prefer passing under the English domination than the Spanish, unless his Catholic Majesty should be dis-

posed to grant them some privileges and advantages, to induce them to live under his flag. Ulloa's too great severity has frightened them, and they fear to be governed as despotically as the Mexicans.

"With a million a year, France could keep up here a sufficient force to support the administration of this possession, and to make to the Indians the necessary presents, and she would preserve a colony, where a great attachment is felt for her, and whose commerce may be very advantageous."

It must be observed that Aubry denounced to his government *a dozen of firebrands, who had become the masters of the country, and whom it was absolutely necessary to punish*; and declared *that the honest administration of justice was trampled under foot by the Superior Council*. If such were the sentiments of a Frenchman, whose prejudices and feelings must have been enlisted in favor of his countrymen, if such was the language of the chief of the colony, when addressing his own government, what must have been the impressions of the Spaniards, and is it to be wondered that they subsequently pursued the course which I shall have to describe!

When Ulloa arrived at Havana, he found in that city eight hundred troops, that were preparing to come to New Orleans with Urissa, late consul of Spain at Bordeaux, and recently promoted to the office of intendant of Louisiana. Urissa had stopped at Havana to take a million of dollars, which the King of Spain had appropriated to meet the payment of his intended expenses in the new domain which he had just acquired. If the eight hundred men, and particularly, if the million of dollars, a sum which the colonists had never, as yet, seen in coin in Louisiana, had arrived in time, it is likely



that there would have been no revolution. But, on being informed of the treatment inflicted on Ulloa, Urissa determined to return to Europe.

The news of the revolution in Louisiana reached Spain in forty days, and a cabinet council was held on the subject, to determine\* whether Spain should retain Louisiana, on account of the extreme importance of establishing barriers to the aggrandizements of the English, or leave it in the hands of France. The council was composed of the Duke of Alba, Don Jaime Masones de Lima, Don Juan Gregorio Muniain, Don Miguel de Muzquiz, the Count of Aranda, the Baron Don Julian de Arriaga and the Marquis of San Juan de Piedras Albas. It was on the 11th of February, 1769, that the Marquis of Grimaldi submitted to these gentlemen all the documents relative to what had occurred in Louisiana, requesting them to give, individually, their separate opinion in writing. On the 5th of March, the Duke of Alba gave this brief and characteristic opinion. It bears the stamp of the hereditary temper of the men of that haughty and inflexible house.

“I am of opinion that the King ought to retain Louisiana, on account of the extreme importance of the river Mississippi being the fixed and settled limit of the English possessions.

“That his Majesty should choose a man of intelligence and energy, and send him with the necessary forces to subject those people, and, at the same time, with all the powers to cure such disorders, by striking them at the root.

“That the form of the government in the colony be radically changed, in order to leave no means within the

\* Sobre si conviene conservar España esta posesion, por la suma importancia de poner limites á los Ingleses, o quedarse por de la Francia.



reach of the malice or audacity of those people, to attempt other revolutions.

“That all the members of the Superior Council there existing, and the deputies of the commerce of Bordeaux, be immediately transported to Europe, and also every other person that may be suspected.

“And, taking into consideration that, from the possession of that colony, it does not seem that any other advantage can be derived than that of determining incontestable limits between the neighboring powers, I am of opinion that it be reduced within very narrow bounds, in order that its administration should cost the King as little as possible.

“But finally, what, to my judgment, appears to be of more importance than all the rest is, that it be seen throughout the world, and particularly in America, that the King knows how, and is able, to repress any attempt whatever, derogatory to the respect due to the royal majesty.”\*

Don Jaime Masones de Lima, Don Miguel de Muzquiz, and Don Julian de Arriaga gave their opinions on the 21st of March. Don Jaime Masones de Lima said:

“Having examined the documents submitted to my consideration, it seems to me that it would be proper to retain possession of that colony, considering that the river Mississippi forms an already established line of demarcation between the possession of the French and of the English. I have only to add that this advantage, which is the only one I can conceive, is not counterbalanced by the inconveniences which I foresee as being

\* Lo que enfin importa mas que todo, á mi parecer, es que se vea en el mundo, y en America especialmente, que el Rey sabe y puede reprimir cualquiera intento contrario al respeto que se debe á la Majestad.

likely to result, in the future, from retaining possession of that colony.

“One of them is, that the colony is entirely inhabited by Frenchmen, who are openly inimical to our government, and who are supported by the partiality of their countrymen in France; that there is no fortified place in it (*presidio*) and that the quality of the soil does not admit of such works, the want of which would require a larger number of troops to keep the colonists in subjection. Such being the case, it is proper to consider whether the expenses of retaining that possession are not liable to exceed the damages which we may suffer from its contraband trade, should it be in other hands.

“The Count of Fuentes, in the letter which was read to the council of ministers, treats this question with sufficient precision and details, and in a manner which did not fail to produce much impression on my mind.

“But I further say that, in case my opinion should not prevail, on the policy of our retaining that colonial possession, and in case, for the reasons given by the Count of Fuentes, and on account of the inconveniences I have pointed out, his Majesty should be inclined to leave it in the hands of France, then, the better to provide for the future, I recommend a stipulation by which it should be understood, that France shall never cede that province, either to the English or to the colonists themselves, without the consent of Spain, reserving its reversion to us, whenever France shall feel disposed to part with it.

“Having done with the question of his Majesty retaining possession of the colony, which is the one specially presented to the council, I proceed to express what offers itself to my mind on the offence committed by its inhab-

itants against the person of Don Antonio de Ulloa, as this subject is somewhat connected with the other.

“Supposing, then that Spain is to retain possession of that colony according to my opinion, I consider that the crime committed by the inhabitants deserves the most severe and rigorous punishment, on account of the circumstances which accompanied its commission. But, however offensive their conduct may have been to the King and to his subjects, it remains not the less an outrage against the Majesty of the Most Christian King, because so far as we are concerned, the colonists having before them no other document than the act of cession made by his Most Christian Majesty, and registered by their Superior Council, and until now, Spain having not by any public act taken solemn possession of the province, the correct construction to be put on what has occurred may be looked upon as problematical among the French, and even among us. But considering that the colonists declare themselves to be the subjects of his Most Christian Majesty, they thus increase their culpability, on account of the notorious insolence with which they disobeyed his orders, as they could not plead their ignorance of the treaty of cession.

“For these reasons I have come to the conclusion that, whatever be the means that we may employ to obtain satisfaction for so enormous an offence, it would be proper that we should come to an understanding with France; so that, by procuring her concurrence in the punishment of that offence, we shall avoid that any military operation to which we might proceed by ourselves, be accused of being unjust by those who consider the question of possession as doubtful, and who would argue that we enforce our authority, without having previously established our sovereignty, because we never made

apparent and publicly known to the colonists, by any act of notoriety, the new obligation of vassalage to which they were subjected by virtue of the cession made by his Most Christian Majesty.

"This is all that my poor abilities venture to suggest to the King, in order that his Majesty may resolve what may be the most agreeable to his royal breast, as the determination which he will take will certainly be the best for the occasion."

So much for the very considerate and courtier-like opinion of Don Jaime Masones de Lima. Now comes Don Juan de Arriaga.

"From the moment, said he, that France offered to cede Louisiana, it seemed opportune to me to take her, not because it might be a profitable possession to us in a pecuniary point of view, but because of the advantage which we obtain of securing indisputable limits between us and the English, who never stand in need of some pretext or other to overstep them, without any open and avowed act of transgression.

"For the same reason I persist in my former opinion; I recommend, however, that proper precautions be taken in the establishment of the government of that colony, not only on account of what occurred recently, but also on account of the information we have acquired on the composition of that population, which, as Ulloa says in one of his dispatches, is made up of all sorts of people, without fealty, without law and without religion. It is therefore evident that, unless we cut off and remove the most conspicuous and most vitiated portion of that population, and unless we establish for the rest new rules of government, not only with regard to the political, but also the religious organization of that colony, we cannot with any security rely on that possession, except it be

through force, and with the aid of troops to bring those people to submission; the consequences of which measures would be our going into enormous expenses, and our being in a state of constant suspicion and anxiety.

“The examination of the means to be employed requires the most serious reflection, and calls for the most detailed information from Ulloa, because the points which it is necessary to regulate are numerous. One of the first to be taken into consideration is the number of troops to be sent there, and the expenses it will put us to, in order to restrict them within what can be supplied out of the royal revenue and treasury of Mexico; and although it is not to be hoped that the commerce of that colony can be of any advantage to his Majesty, nevertheless it is necessary to determine by whom and how it is to be carried on, it being important that there be no failure in that part of it which is relative to the Indians, with whom we must, by all means, keep on terms of amity.”

As to the Marquis of San Juan de Piedras Albas, he said:

“I think that it is of extreme importance for Spain to retain under her domination that part of the colony of Louisiana which was ceded by France, not only because it is a valuable barrier and a means of protection for the provinces of New Spain and the Mexican Gulf, but also for the other reasons which were given verbally in the cabinet council, and which have convinced me in the most effective manner, that, taking into consideration the position of Louisiana, in no other hands than in ours can that colony, for the present and for the future, be as important and useful to Spain; and, under the circumstances in which we are placed, supposing that

France persists, as she does beyond a doubt, in her disposition to ratify her voluntary donation to Spain, and is prepared, (considering that she is more particularly interested in resenting the indolent want of respect with which she was disobeyed by her subjects and vassals,) to accomplish what, so far, she has not been able to execute, and to put Spain in quiet and peaceful possession of that domain, I reiterate the opinion which I have already expressed: that Spain must maintain herself in the possession of that province, which was ceded to her in good faith, and which was not formally delivered up to her on account of the criminal disobedience of its inhabitants."

On the next day, the 22d of March, the Count of Aranda, who had the reputation of being one of the shrewdest and ablest statesmen of Spain, presented a somewhat more elaborate opinion than those of his colleagues. Taken in connection with the events which have happened on the continent of North America, and which have transformed colonies into empires, it certainly is a curious and remarkable document.

"Considering, he said, the original cause of the acquisition of Louisiana by Spain, and the reasons which were then given for it: and, whereas that colony must be looked upon as one of the dependencies of the crown, and as so much territory annexed to our Mexican provinces, I am of opinion that it was wisely done to accept the donation which France made of it, and that it is indispensable to keep possession of that acquisition, at whatever cost.

"The more or less fertility and extent of Louisiana is not the principal question to be examined. But we ought to judge of the importance of that acquisition, from the fact that it extends our Mexican territories to

the bank of the Mississippi, a well known-barrier and a distant one from the population of New Mexico, and that it furnishes us, through that river, with an indelible line of demarcation between our provinces and those of the English, which have been widened by their acquisition of our domain of Florida; and that it gives the occasion to create, at certain determined points, a chain of posts which, in time of peace, will be the evidences of our territorial rights, and will prevent usurpations and trespasses made under the plea of ignorance. Besides securing the notoriety and the indisputable acknowledgment of our sovereignty, we obtain a precious protection for ourselves, and oppose a serious impediment to the progress of the English, because, in case of a rupture with them, they will have to begin their operations from afar; because they will be exposed to great losses before having gained much ground, and will not have the advantage to make, in anticipation, secret preparations in the interior of their possessions, in order to shorten and facilitate their operations on the breaking out of hostilities.

“In short, under this view, which is full of interest, the insurrection at New Orleans seems to be an object of the greatest importance, not only for the reasons which have already been expressed, but on account of its consequences.

“Its situation in the Gulf of Mexico, its being already, as it were, an European town by its population, its being inhabited altogether by merchants and traders, and its being converted into a free port, which no doubt would be the case, would attract thither large numbers from Europe; and considering that a republic in Louisiana would be independent from all the European powers, it would then become the interest of all to keep on

terms of amity with her, and to support her existence.

“The favorable circumstances in which Louisiana would then be placed, would not only increase her population, but also enlarge her limits, and transform her into a rich, flourishing and free State, in sight of our provinces, which would present the melancholy contrast of exhaustion and of the want of cultivation.\*

“From the example under their eyes, the inhabitants of our vast Mexican domains would be led to consider their utter want of commerce, the extortions of their different governors, the little esteem in which they are held, the few offices which they are permitted to fill, and would weigh the great inducement which they would have to hate still more the Spanish domination and to think that they can brave it with greater security, when they shall see that a weak province, compared with their extensive and populous country, can make good her position with impunity and secure her prosperity.

“Even if by dint of efforts to meliorate as much as possible the government of the Mexican provinces, and improve the condition of their inhabitants, we should succeed in avoiding the fatal revolution which might break out, how could we prevent the illicit commerce of Louisiana by sea with all the harbors on our coasts, and also by land with Texas and New Mexico, and through them to old Mexico?

“To think of being agreeable to France by returning to her what she ceded, would be attended by the gravest inconveniences ; because, besides that in her hands the colony, by its situation, would be a possession prejudicial to our commerce, she would probably, on the first emer-

\* A remarkable prophecy!



gency, avail herself of it as a sort of pledge or guarantee, which she would transfer to the English, whom it suits exceedingly, and which she would use for the purpose of obtaining peace on better terms.

“I can easily imagine the costs of fitting out a proper expedition to retake possession of Louisiana, as well as to keep her for the future, and also the doubts which present themselves, whether, in the progress of time, the profits which might be derived from that colony would compensate for the immediate expenses to be incurred, or at least meet those that would be required annually. But all these reasons, individually and collectively, cannot counterbalance, in my judgment, those which militate on the other side, considering that the keeping of that possession, although expensive, is necessary to preserve our principal dominions.

“Of what importance to us is it, that the French should retain their known limits with regard to the English, when such not being the case on the side of our territories, it will be left to their own pleasure, on their retaking possession of Louisiana, to extend their frontiers at will and to our prejudice? So that, instead of keeping at a distance our neighboring enemy, by retaining Louisiana in our hands, we should admit between him and us another power, and that power might recognize no barriers to his own encroachments on our possessions. Thus, for the very reason that there are no established limits between Louisiana and Mexico, the present rebels would, if they were permitted to remain so, have a pretext for claiming an arbitrary extension of territory, and, besides the disputes to which it would give rise, it would put us under the necessity of going to the expense of establishing a new *cordon*.

“It seems to me, therefore, that the best policy is to repossess ourselves of New Orleans, with sufficient forces to prevent the possibility of any disgrace to the King’s arms; to expel from the colony all those who were the causes of the late troubles, confiscating their property as a punishment for their rebellion; to order that all those who are innocent, but who may not choose to submit themselves to the new domination, be transported to France, or where they please; to send some Spanish families to Louisiana, to serve as the main root of the new population which is to rule in that country; to limit, for the present, that population to the extent which will be sufficient to keep up there just enough of cultivation to make New Orleans a place capable of offering temporary resources, in cases of need, to the commerce and fleets of his Majesty; and, for the purpose of making known our frontiers as plainly as possible, to establish all along those of the English a chain of posts, at regular intervals of thirty miles, or at the most important points.

“I am also of opinion that we ought not to have in New Orleans more than one small fort, to keep the people in subjection, and to cause the flag of his Majesty to be respected, in case any insult to it should be attempted by the enemies of the crown. By abstaining from making of that town a place of importance, we shall avoid making it an object of attack; because, if with that view, an enemy should send there a considerable body of troops, these very forces might ultimately serve to carry on further designs against Mexico, and our other domains in that part of America.

“What is also of importance is, to ingratiate ourselves with those different Indian nations that are on bad terms with the English, because, by fomenting hostilities on

the part of those Indians, we shall keep the northern establishments of the English in a state of alarm, and by this means oblige them to retain there all their forces, because, should they dare to do otherwise, the Indians I have spoken of, being on their shoulders, would immediately devastate their territories by their irruptions."

On the 24th, Don Miguel de Muzquiz delivered his written opinion in these terms :

"I find inconveniences in leaving Louisiana to the French, but still greater ones, and more certain, in its being retained by Spain.

"From the moment that the French made their first settlements in that country, they have been to the present time imagining more than one project to approach the provinces of Texas and New Mexico, and they have not been able to execute their plans, not only on account of the distances to be overcome, but also because they never could gain the good will of the Indians, and because they had to watch the proceedings of their English neighbors. These same obstacles still subsist for the French and preserve us from the threatened danger of their penetrating into Texas and New Mexico.

"The French have long been in possession of that province, where they are accustomed to enjoy a freedom, as to their persons and as to their commerce, which our laws do not admit of; but they are obliged to suffer and tolerate the excesses which are committed by the Indians, and as these savages prefer a state of war to any other, and as they are armed, they can make sudden and fatal attacks.

"The navigation of the Mississippi is common both to the French and to the English, and, although their

respective territorial limits are determined, it will be impossible for them to avoid having disputes arising from competition, if there be any commerce carried on, and it is better that the encountering of these difficulties should fall on the French rather than on the Spaniards. The French can easily provide for the preservation of Louisiana and keep the English in check with little expense.

“The Spaniards would have many disagreements\* with the French inhabitants of Louisiana and with the Indians, because they would lack the necessary patience to manage these people, and although their submission might be secured by the strong arm of force, yet I do not conceive that the object to be attained is worth the cost.

“It is true that the French will have ingress into the Gulf of Mexico, under the pretext of going to Louisiana, and will be able to carry on a contraband trade, but besides that it is impossible to prevent this evil, even were Louisiana ours, it does not seem to me that the injuries which we wish to escape from would be equal to the expenses that the possession of that colony would entail upon us.

“Should we retain Louisiana, we should incur a perpetual and annual expenditure of three hundred thousand dollars, put ourselves under the necessity of increasing the number of our officers, have incessant causes of difficulties with the English, and have to encounter numerous obstacles in the administration of that possession.

“In time of war, we should have to reinforce that

\* Los Españoles tendrían muchos disgustos con los Franceses que se quedasen, y con los Indios salvajes, porque les faltaría la paciencia que se necesitaba para contemplarlos, y aunque con la fuerza se puede asegurar todo, no concibo que el objeto merezca tanto gasto.

province, and the means employed to accomplish this aim would be so much lacking for the preservation and defence of more essential points : so that, weakened as we are at present by the necessity of providing for so many scattered posts in America, we should increase our weakness by putting ourselves to the charge of maintaining and defending Louisiana, whilst, leaving her to the French, it is probable that they would protect her against the English better than we can do.

“For these reasons and others to be deduced from them, my opinion is, that it is proper for the crown to abandon Louisiana to the French. It remains to be examined, whether the King can do so without any forfeit of honor. Ulloa took possession of the government of the colony, only *ad interim*, so that said act may be considered as merely preparatory to the solemn formality of a final taking of possession by the officers and troops he was waiting for ; and thus, according to my judgment, the offence is common to the two crowns, and should Louisiana remain in the hands of France, it would become her sense of self-dignity not to suffer to go unpunished those who have disobeyed the orders of her king.”

On the 31st (March), Don Juan Gregorio Muniaín closed the consultation with the following concise opinion:

“The situation of the colony of New Orleans which, with its limits, extends itself all along the right bank of the Mississippi as far as the unknown mountains, many leagues beyond its meeting with the Missouri, secures the following advantages :

“1°.—It establishes between New Mexico and the territories ceded to England invariable limits, such as the course of a river which preserves its name from its source to its mouth in the Gulf of Mexico.

“2°.—By giving to that colony the same uniform sys-

tem of government which has been imposed on all our American provinces, and by keeping in active service at the port of New Orleans a small and light frigate, we shall repress the commercial frauds which are meditated against us from Florida, and put a stop to the contraband trade.

“3°.—By encouraging the cultivation of wheat, and other grains and plants, we shall promote a trade in flour and vegetables, of extreme utility to Havana, Puerto-Rico and the other Islands.

“4°.—It seems to me that the expenses attending the preservation and administration of that colony, cannot be greater than those to which we were put in Florida, by the possession of St. Augustin, Pensacola and Apalache, and those which we incur, at present, in maintaining our Presidios in New-Mexico, some of which, if not all, could be suppressed with advantage.

“5°.—In order to avoid that the English establish themselves without opposition in our territory by crossing the river Mississippi, it will be necessary to erect some small fortified posts according to the fashion of the country, that will serve as scouts, and will advise the governor of the colony of the least possible change.

“6°.—Should this colony be ceded to France with all its territorial enlargement, that power might extend itself towards Mexico, and establish with that country an illicit commerce, as the merchants of that nation have already done. Besides, should France be worsted in war by the English, she would have an object of value to offer to them, to obtain an advantageous peace for her establishments in Africa and Asia.

“For these reasons I am of opinion, that it is proper to keep possession of the colony of New Orleans with all its limits.”

These deliberations of the statesmen of Spain, in 1769, show in an interesting manner, the policy which guided her in the formation and prosecution of her colonial system, and give the key to her subsequent administration of Louisiana. But it is impossible to peruse them without a smile, when taken in connection with those wonderful events, those political, moral, social and national transformations, and those irresistible workings of the human mind, which have since so changed the face of the world in little more than three-quarters of a century. To the eye of philosophy how illustrative is it of the vanity of man, when with his puny foresight and blind wisdom he strains to look into futurity, and, attempting to prepare for its exigencies, builds up the tower of strength which he fancies of sufficiently enduring materials to meet those anticipated necessities of which time only has the secret !

It has been seen that only one minister in the council of Spain was of opinion that Louisiana ought to be returned to France. Some time after, in the month of May, the Marquis of Grimaldi informed the Count of Fuentes, the Spanish ambassador at the Court of Versailles, of all the proceedings which had taken place at the Court of Madrid, and said :

“The King approved of the conclusions to which had come the council of ministers, not only on account of the reasons by them expressed, but also on considering that, if what had occurred in Louisiana remained unpunished, this bad example might have a fatal influence over our other American possessions, and even over those of the other powers, in which a spirit of sedition and independence has begun to spread, as it appears by what lately happened to the French themselves in the Island of St. Domingo. His Majesty concluded also, that from

his being essentially in possession of Louisiana in virtue of a very legitimate title, although it is not completed by the ceremony of taking possession, that colony was to be reputed a province of the crown, and its inhabitants, his subjects; whence it resulted that it appertained to his Majesty alone to recover that possession, and to punish the temerity of the colonists, and the offence of which they have been guilty towards his government and his people. His Majesty thought also, that it was necessary that it be seen throughout the world, that he knew and was able, without the assistance of any foreign power, to repress the audacity of sedition, and all designs whatever, derogatory to the respect due to his dignity and to his crown. In accordance with these principles, his Majesty has resolved to use force to reduce the rebels to submission, and has ordered that the necessary measures to that effect be taken without delay.

“Don Alexandro O'Reilly, Inspector and Lieutenant general of the royal armies, had already been designated by the King to repair to Havana and to other cities in New-Spain, in order to review the troops and militia, and it seemed to his Majesty that this officer could at the same time be intrusted with the expedition against Louisiana. Consequently, being ordered to hasten his departure, O'Reilly immediately went to Cadix, where he found a frigate which had been prepared for him. He embarked, and he must be, at present, near the Island of Cuba. He has drawn none of his means of operation from Cadix, because it was thought proper to conceal the object of his commission. To that effect, he received an ostensible order which treated of nothing else than of inspection and general review, but he well knew that he would find at Havana all of which he stood in need. The instruction given to him was, to take at that



place the battalions of infantry, the ammunition and the other materials which he might deem necessary, to transport himself to Louisiana, and, after having taken possession of her in the name of his Majesty, to have the heads of the rebellion tried and punished according to law, and then to remove out of the colony all the individuals and families whose presence might endanger its tranquillity. He was also ordered to provide for the military and police organization of the province, to establish the necessary rules for a correct administration of justice and of the finances, to secure the dependence and the subordination of the inhabitants, and to frame the new form of government—the whole, according to the verbal instructions which had been or might be given to him. He takes along with him persons learned in the law, who will superintend the judicial proceedings, and he has been authorized to have recourse to the force of arms, in case the inhabitants should oblige him to resort to it by their resistance. It seemed proper to invest Don Alexandro O'Reilly with these extensive powers, on account of the distance at which we are from that country. But, as the King, whose character is well known, is always inclined to be mild and clement, he has ordered O'Reilly to be informed that his will is, that a lenient course be pursued in the colony, and that expulsion from it be the only punishment inflicted on those who have deserved a more severe one.

“I could have informed you sooner of all this, but, as you will not have to act in the matter, because the King has assumed to take satisfaction himself for the offence committed by the inhabitants of the colony, we judged that it would be useless to send you, by the ordinary courier, the great mass of papers which would be necessary to make you acquainted with all that had occurred.

I had also thought of transmitting to you, with these documents, the Memorial or Manifesto published by the inhabitants of Louisiana. But I am persuaded that a printed copy of it must have reached you, considering that it has been republished in France with the decree of the Superior Council. I do not think that I am at liberty to conceal from you, Sir, that, when the King was made aware of the insolent language of that document, he felt greatly indignant, and that his indignation was not less, when he was informed that the authors of that memorial had not only succeeded in making it public, but also had caused to be inserted in different European gazettes, under the head of a *Paris Article*, a certain composition in which our government and nation were represented under the blackest colors. The entire freedom with which the delegates from the colony are allowed to remain in Paris has contributed, not a little, to the publication of those insolent declamations, and our enemies may have imagined that these men were not disapproved by the minister of his Most Christian Majesty, from the fact that not the slightest demonstration has been made against them. I must however assure you that the King never suspected any thing of the sort, and that, besides, he is convinced that the honor of his government and the credit of his nation can never depend upon the invectives of gazetiers, and of those who are their instigators. But I must tell you frankly, that the delicate feelings of his Majesty would never have allowed him, had he been in the place of his cousin of France, to be satisfied with closing his ears to those who style themselves the delegates of the colony, and that he certainly would have caused to be punished, the audacity of reprinting and republishing in Spain writings injurious to the government of his Most Christian

Majesty and to the French nation. His Majesty thought that we must not remain contented with the intimate union which binds the two monarchs and the two ministers, but that we must make it embrace the two nations, and he is certain that writings of this kind will not produce such results. Your Excellency knows very well that the loss of great interests is looked upon in Spain with indifference, but that it is not so with regard to insults and contumelies.

“As soon as we received the said manifesto of the colonists, it was determined that Mr. de Ulloa should answer the fables and the exaggerated accusations which it contains. But before his being informed of this determination, he had anticipated our intentions, and had sent from Cadix the communication hereto annexed. The copy of it which I send you, with the abstract which accompanies it, renders, as it were, useless, all the other papers which I had intended to forward to you. These two documents will demonstrate to you, that the true object of the inhabitants of the colony, and particularly of the heads of the sedition, was to live in the most absolute independence, without laws, without police and without order, and that the King has treated, and intended to treat them, at all future time, with kindness, and to favor them with marks of predilection and with a grant of liberty far different from those which his other American colonies have been permitted to enjoy, whatever may be their merit, and whatever services they may have rendered to the metropolis.

“You will give an account of the whole of this to the Duke of Choiseul, and you will ask him for a letter or declaration from his Most Christian Majesty, in improbation of the conduct of the inhabitants of Louisiana. You will beg that minister to invite his Most Christian

Majesty to declare, that the said inhabitants of the colony, being the subjects of the King his cousin, must throw themselves upon his mercy and live under his laws. The act of cession of the colony, as you will see by a mere reference to the copy, was absolute, and without any obligation whatever on the part of the King. Only, in the letter subsequently written to Mr. D'Abbadie with regard to the delivering up of the colony to Spain, his Most Christian Majesty insinuated to the King his cousin his expectations that his Catholic Majesty would maintain the inhabitants in the enjoyment of their privileges. This is what the King was resolved upon, and he had even issued orders accordingly, but said inhabitants have made themselves unworthy of this favor by their rebellion.

"This is all, sir, that I have to request you to attend to, for the present; for although the Gazette of France\* ought, as a matter of course, to have disavowed the article inserted in some of the papers of the Low Countries under the head of *Paris News*, it would now be a little too late to do so, and it would not become us to solicit such a thing. We have contented ourselves with writing to Vienna and Holland, to have the remedy applied to the evil."

The old hereditary temper of Spain is condensed in this composition, and particularly in this phrase: "*Your Excellency knows very well that the loss of great interests is looked upon in Spain with indifference, but that it is not so with regard to insults or contumelies.*" As an expression of feelings and sentiments, as an exhibition of cold and solemn majesty, this document is as characteristic, in its way, of the Spanish nation, as the awe-

\* The official journal.

inspiring grandeur of that architectural wonder, the well known palace of the Escorial.

While the fate of Louisiana was thus discussed and settled in Spain, that colony had resumed a certain degree of apparent tranquillity, but it is to be questioned whether it was not as much the torpor occasioned by fear, as the calm which betokens true repose and a sense of security. Now that the revolution had been accomplished, its results could be measured with more accuracy. Now that the storm was hushed, that the angry waves were smoothed into a liquid plain, it was easy to discover if anything was left floating on its surface to inspire hope. Now that the excitement of action had given way to the considerate workings of reflection, there was ample leisure to examine the extent and nature of the dangers which had been brooding, and which many thought they saw rising up like black clouds on the verge of the horizon. What would France do? What would Spain resolve? These were questions which anxiety propounded to itself, and could not answer. They were not few, those who had already repented of what they had done, and who earnestly struggled to show that they had not participated in the revolution. As it had frequently occurred in similar circumstances, the leaders were beginning to find themselves in a state of isolation, and to be alone pointed out to the anger of the coming avenger. The crowd among which they had lately stood, now shrank away from them gradually, in obedience to the same instinct which prompts the wayfarer to avoid, when the lightning flashes, the proximity of those tall trees whose shade he would have courted, had heaven smiled on the green honors of their majestic heads.

## SIXTH LECTURE.

REACTION IN THE COLONY AGAINST THE AUTHORS OF THE REVOLUTION—AUBRY'S LETTER ON THIS SUBJECT—FORTITUDE AND PERSEVERANCE OF THE CHIEFS OF THE INSURGENTS—ATTEMPT TO COMPEL THE SPANISH FRIGATE TO DEPART FROM THE COLONY—SECOND DECREE OF THE COUNCIL AGAINST SAID VESSEL—EXPLANATIONS ASKED OF AUBRY BY THE COUNCIL—AUBRY'S HAUGHTY ANSWER—HIS BOLD ATTITUDE AGAINST THE INSURGENTS—THE COLONISTS' ADDRESS TO THE DUKE OF PRASLIN—AUBRY'S LETTER TO THE SAME—THE DELEGATES OF THE COLONISTS TO FRANCE FAIL IN THEIR MISSION—THE DELEGATE ST. LETTE AND THE DUKE OF CHOISEUL—DECREE OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT CONVERTING THE PAPER CURRENCY OF THE COLONY INTO BONDS BEARING INTEREST—FOUCAULT'S TREACHERY TO HIS CONFEDERATES—HE DENOUNCES THEM IN A DISPATCH TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT—THIRD DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE FRIGATE—IT IS COUNTERACTED BY AUBRY—THE FRIGATE DEPARTS VOLUNTARILY—WHAT OCCURRED ON THE OCCASION—INCREASE OF THE REACTION—THE COLONISTS ATTEMPT TO GAIN THE FAVOR AND PROTECTION OF GAYARRE, LOYOLA AND NAVARRO—DESPERATE RESOLUTIONS OF THE LEADERS OF THE REVOLUTION—THEIR FRUITLESS ATTEMPTS TO THROW THEMSELVES INTO THE ARMS OF ENGLAND—THEY PROPOSE TO EXPEL AUBRY AND THE FRENCH TROOPS—THEIR PLAN OF A REPUBLIC—PROJECTED ESTABLISHMENT OF A BANK—THE LEADERS ARE ABANDONED BY THE PEOPLE—ARRIVAL OF O'REILLY AT THE BALIZE WITH SPANISH TROOPS—VAIN EFFORTS AT RESISTANCE—LAFRÉNIÈRE AND HIS ASSOCIATES INFORM AUBRY THAT THEY SUBMIT TO THE SPANIARDS—O'REILLY'S BIOGRAPHY—HE SENDS BOULIGNY AS A MESSENGER TO AUBRY—HIS RECEPTION BY LOYOLA, GAYARRE AND NAVARRO—THEY WAIT ON AUBRY AT MIDNIGHT—AUBRY'S DEPARTMENT ON THAT OCCASION—AUBRY'S SPEECH TO THE PEOPLE ON THE PUBLIC SQUARE—LAFRÉNIÈRE, MILHET, AND MARQUIS GO TO THE BALIZE AND PRESENT THEIR HOMAGE TO O'REILLY—LAFRÉNIÈRE AND MARQUIS' SPEECHES—O'REILLY'S ANSWER—AUBRY GOES DOWN THE RIVER TO PRESENT HIS RESPECTS TO O'REILLY—AUBRY'S PROCLAMATION—ARRIVAL OF O'REILLY AT NEW ORLEANS—POSSESSION OF THE COLONY TAKEN ON THE 18TH OF AUGUST, 1769—AUBRY'S DISPATCH TO HIS GOVERNMENT ON THIS EVENT—O'REILLY GIVES A FESTIVAL IN HONOR OF AUBRY AND THE FRENCH AUTHORITIES—O'REILLY'S LETTER OF INQUIRY TO AUBRY—AUBRY'S ANSWER—ARREST OF THE CHIEF CONSPIRATORS—O'REILLY'S SPEECH TO THEM—THEY ARE IMPRISONED TO STAND THEIR TRIAL FOR REBELLION—VILLERÉ'S DEATH—TRADITION OF THE BLOODY SHIRT—O'REILLY'S PROCLAMATION GRANTING FULL PARDON TO ALL, EXCEPT TO A

FEW LEADERS—SOLEMN OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TAKEN OR TO BE TAKEN BY ALL THE INHABITANTS OF LOUISIANA—FOUCAULT'S ARREST—HE EXCEPTS TO THE JURISDICTION OF THE SPANISH TRIBUNAL—HIS PLEA IS ADMITTED—HE IS TRANSPORTED TO FRANCE, AND SHUT UP IN THE BASTILE—ARREST OF BRAUD, THE KING'S PRINTER—HIS PLEA IN SELF-JUSTIFICATION—HIS DEFENCE IS FOUND GOOD, AND HE IS SET AT LIBERTY—AUBRY'S SERVILITY TO, AND ENTHUSIASM FOR, O'REILLY—AUBRY'S LETTER TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT, IN WHICH HE EXTOLS EVERY ACT OF O'REILLY—O'REILLY'S OPINION OF FOUCAULT—AUBRY'S SPEECH TO O'REILLY, IN HIS OWN NAME, AND IN THAT OF THE WHOLE BODY OF FRENCH OFFICERS.

THE year 1768 had closed in gloom for the colonists, and no sunshine had opened the career of its successor. A lowering cloud seemed to have settled over the whole colony, and the doubts which existed on the course to be pursued by Spain and France were thought to be worse than the saddest realities. The chiefs of the insurgents were evidently losing ground, and the Spanish officers, Loyola, Gayarre, and Navarro began to meet with more smiles than frowns, and to discover a very perceptible disposition to court their favor. Governor Aubry himself appears to have been actuated by this feeling, when on the 15th of February, 1769, he spontaneously wrote this letter to the captain-general of the island of Cuba:

"I hope that Mr. Ulloa does me justice, and that he has testified to my good conduct; for no one ever loved and venerated the Spanish nation more than I do. This revolution disgraces the French of Louisiana. Although it has not as yet spent its fury and its frenzied course, yet it seems to me that some of the most obstinate among the insurgents begin to look into the future with some uneasiness, and even fear; and if, in these circumstances, we were favored with the arrival of a battalion and the receipt of some money, coupled with assurances that all that has occurred shall be forgotten or forgiven, tranquillity would soon be restored, after the just inflic-



tion of deserved punishments on a small number of seditious persons, who have usurped all powers in this colony and who have done all the harm."

Nevertheless, those chiefs of the insurrection to whom Aubry was alluding, and who had already lost some of their influence, struggled against the impending perils of their situation with no faltering courage. They tried to embolden their confederates by showing them that they persisted in their original designs, and that their faith in their ultimate success was not shaken. Thus the Spanish frigate against which a decree of expulsion had been issued on the 14th of December, 1768, having ever since remained motionless in the river in defiance of the decree, the conspirators convened a meeting of the Superior Council on the 20th of February, 1769. The Council asked Aubry to explain why its decree had not been executed. Aubry haughtily answered, that the captain of the Spanish frigate would depart at the precise time only which had been prescribed to him by Ulloa, and that, if any attempt was made to hasten that departure, he, Aubry, would oppose it by force. Accordingly he equipped four hundred men, Spanish and French, to back his word, and to show that he was determined to be true to his declaration. This demonstration he thought himself called upon to make, on account of the issuing of another decree by the Superior Council, in confirmation of its former order of expulsion against the frigate.

It will be observed that Aubry, who had been so powerless at the breaking out of the revolution on the 28th of October, had now a respectable force in hand to oppose the conspirators, and assumed a much bolder attitude. These were unmistakable signs of the reaction which had taken place.



But the colonists who had remained faithful to the cause of the revolution, sent, on the 20th of March, another petition to the Duke of Praslin, in which they sued for his support near the king, and repeated about the same arguments and the same language which they had used in their former addresses. Similar applications had been made to every prince of the blood, and almost to every person supposed to exercise some influence at court.

When this address reached the minister Duke of Praslin, he, almost at the same time, received a despatch from Aubry, of the 1st of April, in which this officer informed him that the people being overwhelmed by the destitution to which they were reduced, were murmuring against the chiefs of the insurrection, whose party was rapidly thinning away.

In the mean time, the new deputies whom the colonists had sent to France succeeded no better than their predecessors. Bienville, on whose support they might have relied, so far as it went, had ceased to exist, and the minister Duke of Choiseul, who had advised the cession, was still in office. St. Lette, one of the deputies, had in early life attracted the friendly regard of that nobleman, and a sort of intimacy had sprung up between them. The Duke welcomed with open arms the friend of his youthful days, and prevented his return to Louisiana by giving him a lucrative employment in the East Indies. But he received with marked displeasure St. Lette's colleagues, and treated them as troublesome intruders. He told them that it was too late for the King of France to undo what he had done; and that the King of Spain had given the necessary orders to take possession of the province. Nothing now remained for the deputies to do, but to hasten back and to inform their fellow citizens of their irrevocable doom.

These deputies had also been instructed to solicit from the French government some final settlement concerning the notes which it had emitted, and which formed the currency of the country. The King of France took into consideration their representations on the subject, and ordered that these notes be brought back to the French treasury in Louisiana, before the 1st of September, 1769, in order to be converted into bonds bearing an interest of five per cent. until complete payment. It will be recollected that Ulloa had offered, in 1766, to take up this paper at the rate of depreciation, (75 per cent.,)—which had been fixed by the French government itself, and to pay for its value in dollars. The colonists had refused on the ground that the King of France would, in the end, redeem that paper currency at par. Thus, as it is seen, their hopes were not realized, and the conversion which had been resorted to, being looked upon as an expedient of doubtful character which promised little for the future, if appreciated with the experience of the past, was not calculated to restore any degree of ease to the affairs of the colony.

Foucault, who had taken so active a part in the conspiracy, although in his official acts and his language in public he had endeavored so to equivocate as to be able to side, when the time should come, with the victorious party, and to claim the merit of having always belonged to its flag, having studied the signs of the horizon, and ascertained from which quarter the wind was likely to blow, trimmed his sails accordingly. The cloak which had concealed the conspirator was partially laid aside, not to show the true character beneath its folds, but to allow the head of the informer to peer out, and watch the opportunity for open denunciation. Thus, on the 21st of March, he had written to the French cabinet at

Versailles, to justify himself for having convened the Council which had expelled Ulloa, and he had given it out as an excuse, that he had yielded to force only, as he had not at his disposal over one hundred and fifty men to oppose the one thousand rebels who threatened the Spaniards. He also declared that, if there were any truth in the rumors whispered about, the Syndics or Headmen who had been selected by the different classes of the inhabitants to watch over their interests, had sadly misused the powers delegated to them; that the number of persons demanding the complete expulsion of the Spaniards had considerably diminished, and furthermore, that many were opposed to it, because they feared losing, in that case, what was due to them for the Spanish obligations they held in their hands.

The cautious phraseology in which the whole of Foucault's despatch is written, may be offered as a model of composition to such artful villains. "Were it possible for me," said he, "to feel the public pulse on these matters, I should perhaps verify that these rumors are well founded. Should this be the fact, I would then, jointly with Mr. Aubry, pursue such a course as would be sufficient to overawe certain individuals, who take themselves to be very important personages. They are, after all, but pretty bad fellows, who, being loaded with debt, seem striving with eager emulation to avail themselves of the overthrow of the colony, in order to retain with impunity the funds which have been advanced to them, and who are indifferent about the country they may live in, considering that they are not bound to Louisiana by the actual possession of any real estate. I think that, were it not for them, I should no longer stand witness to the most indecent and audacious deportment. There would no longer be any reason to fear the execution of

the detestable project which is said to have been formed, of burning New Orleans, on the first news of the arrival of the Spanish troops, if it be still decreed that Louisiana must belong to his Catholic Majesty. Mr. D'Acosta, the captain of the frigate, would be at liberty to prepare himself quietly to regulate his departure, according to the orders given to him by Ulloa, and the other Spaniards might do the same. The officers of the Spanish administration would no longer be exposed to a forced departure, without having time to settle their accounts, and the anarchy and confusion which have taken the place of the small amount of good order that prevailed in this colony, would soon disappear. But, being under the apprehension, when trying to avoid one evil, of falling into another equally great, I have taken the resolution to be silent and inactive, whilst waiting for the orders of the two courts of France and Spain. Without caring, however, for the discontent produced by all my acts of opposition to the enterprises of these turbulent spirits against the Spaniards, I will use the most practicable means to contrive that the officers of the Spanish administration remain here until the receipt of those orders."

It is no very far stretch of the imagination to suppose that, on the very day when this letter was written, in which the fathers of the insurrection to which Foucault had stood sponsor were denounced as *bankrupts, thieves, detestable incendiaries, and the like*, this same man entertained at supper as usual, at the country seat of his paramour, Madam Pradel, those *turbulent spirits and would-be important personages* whom he had denounced to the French government, and who, of course, could be no other than his friends and confederates, Lafrénière, Villeré, Noyan, Masan, etc.—whom he had goaded on

to shake off the hated Spanish yoke, and with whose destinies he seemed to have linked his fortunes. There are few conspiracies and perilous enterprises in which such men as Foucault are not to be detected. They are the alloy, the baser metal which appears to be necessary to the composition of the great human coinage. Experience teaches, and the study of historical records demonstrates, that within the shadow of every man of noble thoughts and deeds there always lie some evil spirits, crouching in ambush, and watching for every opportunity to prey on the object of their envy and hatred. It must be admitted that, in the drama in which he was engaged, Foucault acted his part with a consistency of infamy, and a cool, systematic regularity of treachery, which must obtain for him much credit with congenial minds. It is but tardy justice, consolatory it is true, as all acts of justice are, that such a felon should be dragged before the tribunal of posterity, and hung up on the gibbet of atonement.

Notwithstanding the disheartening prospect they had before them, some of the conspirators persisted in their designs, and attempted to make another demonstration against the Spanish frigate, by inducing the Germans to come to town for that purpose. But Aubry sent to the German Coast several officers, whose presence and exhortations prevented the outbreak which was intended. "Mr. de Lafrénière," wrote Aubry, "has much contributed to restore tranquillity. This, to be just to him, must be said in his favor, whatever may have been his previous errors." Great indeed must have been the reaction when Lafrénière came forth to advocate acquiescence!

But the captain of the frigate, in order to do away with all pretexts for further disturbances, resolved to sail on the 20th of April. On that day, all the officers

of that vessel waited in a body on Governor Aubry, and thanked him for the protection and the many favors they had received at his hands. On their returning to the frigate, they met on the bank of the river a large concourse of people who had assembled to witness their departure. The crowd was silent, and gave no sign of hostility. On the contrary, some among them addressed words of sympathy, of personal respect and of friendly greeting to the officers as they passed along. As soon as Captain D'Acosta stepped on the deck of the *Volante*, men were seen running up the masts, and she began to unfurl her broad sails to the strong breeze which courted them to its embrace. Soon after, the three Spanish dignitaries, Loyola, Gayarre and Navarro, who had accompanied D'Acosta on board, were seen descending into their boat, and rapidly approaching the bank of the river. On their landing, the crowd opened before them with respect, and as these gentlemen trod through this human avenue on their way to their residences, they bowed right and left, with some degree of stately formality. No outward signs showed what they may have felt at being thus left alone in the midst of a hostile population. In the steady look with which they met the public gaze there was no fear, no anger, no defiance, but only an expression of cold indifference, although perhaps a close observer might have detected the suppressed scrutinizing glance, which strove to study on the surrounding faces the secret feelings of the hearts.

In the mean time the frigate had begun to move on the water, and as she gracefully glided by, Captain D'Acosta, standing up on the quarter-deck, raised his hand to his hat, took it off, and bowed to the crowd with, as some affected to believe, all the pride of mock humility. At this very moment, the frigate poured out

her broadsides in a salute to the town, and emerging from the cloud of smoke with all her colors gaily sporting in the wind, was seen turning in a few minutes round that point on the opposite side of the river, where now stands the town of Algiers. Thus the last satisfaction which the colonists had desired had been granted to them; yet it was evident that no feeling of exultation existed among the assemblage that stood gazing at the turbid waters of the Mississippi long after the frigate had disappeared. No shouts of joy or triumph had been uttered; silence was on the lips, and anxiety in the hearts of all. They seemed to be in an atmosphere of gloom; and that undefined feeling which proceeds from the vague anticipation of coming danger pervaded the whole multitude. At last, they dispersed in small detached groups, whispering to each other, and bearing stamped on their brows the thoughts that worked in their brains.

The revolutionary tide was indeed ebbing fast away, and leaving stranded on the shore those it had borne onward to momentary success. The conspirators had hoped at first, that, on their showing a strong aversion to a foreign domination, and on their expelling the Spanish Governor, they might have induced both the French and Spanish governments to consider as null the treaty of cession—the more so, that Spain did not seem to set any value on the donation which had been presented to her. When this hope had been frustrated, they attempted to throw themselves into the arms of England by sending emissaries to the governor of Pensacola, with whom they were to enter into arrangements. But the reception which they met in that quarter convinced them that they were to look elsewhere for support. England, besides the breach of faith of which she would have been



guilty, and besides giving the bad example of encouraging the rebellion of colonies, was not then disposed to renew the long wars she had waged against France and Spain, merely for the then paltry consideration of the acquisition of Louisiana.

Reduced to the last stage of despair, the Hotspurs among the insurgents proposed to expel Aubry, and the few French troops that were in the colony, to proclaim New Orleans a free port, and to form a republic, where the oppressed and the needy among all the nations of the earth would find a refuge and a home. The chief of the republic was to be styled *Protector*, and to be assisted by a council of forty men elected by the people, either for life, or for a certain number of years. A bank, on the plan of that of Amsterdam or of Venice, was to be created, and to furnish the commonwealth with the currency of which it would stand in need. The Swiss captain Marquis had originated this scheme of a republic; and he violently and openly recommended its adoption—so much so, that it became a subject of discussion for and against, in printed and in manuscript documents, which were circulated through the colony, and some of which are really of a curious character.

If the plan of Marquis could have been executed, and a Lord Protector elected, it is probable that Lafrénière would have become the Cromwell of Louisiana. There is no doubt but that the colonists would have eagerly adopted this form of government, had it been possible at the time; for it must be recollected that, from the earliest existence of the colony, almost all its governors had uniformly complained of the republican spirit which they had observed in the inhabitants. It would seem as if the European emigrants, on their arriving in Louisiana, had so imbibed the conception and the love of



independence from the roaming life of the Aborigines, from the sight of the boundless forests, from the immensity of the domain which invited conquest, that they waxed impatient of the yoke imposed upon them by a distant power. But the colonists, on maturer and cooler reflection, became convinced that France, Spain and England, for reasons too obvious to be enumerated, would never permit their rebellion to terminate successfully in the establishment of a republic in Louisiana. They therefore abandoned the idea as Quixotic; but they, nevertheless, bequeathed to their posterity the right of claiming for Louisiana the merit of having been the first European colony that entertained the design of proclaiming her independence. The stoutest hearts, however, and the noblest minds cannot achieve impossibilities. The thought of a republic had been but a rosy colored bubble of the imagination, or rather a flitting rainbow spanning the firmament of a dream, and encouraging hopes but to have them extinguished in the night of the gathering storm. So was it with the majority of the colonists, who, in the wreck of their fortunes, having in vain looked round for any means of salvation, now abandoned themselves to the course of events, and were constrained passively to wait for what fate would ultimately decide.

Rumors were rife in the colony as to the preparations which Spain was making to take possession of Louisiana, and to punish the insult which had been offered to her. Nothing positive, however, could be ascertained, and the very vagueness of the rumors added to the anxieties of the public mind. Those who had played the most conspicuous part in the conspiracy were advised to fly; but this could be more easily proposed than executed. It would have been impossible for them to sell their pro-

perty, on account of the extreme penury to which the province was reduced ; and if there had been men able to purchase, they would have hesitated to invest their money in so insecure a manner ; for these sales might perhaps have been set aside, on the ground that they were not made in good faith, but in collusion ; only to protect traitors, and to defraud the Spanish treasury of what confiscation would have brought into its coffers. The leaders of the insurrection, therefore, recoiled from the idea of breaking the ties which bound them to Louisiana, where some of them were born, and where the rest had passed the greater portion of their lives ; and they turned away from the dire prospect of dragging in poverty, with their families, the miserable existence of exiles in foreign lands. Besides, many among them flattered themselves that a prompt and entire submission on their part, coupled with assurances of repentance, would secure pardon and safety.

In proportion as all ideas of resistance were gradually abandoned, and the schemes of the authors of the revolution demonstrated to be impracticable, Loyola, Gayarre and Navarro had seen the circle of their friends increasing, and their own importance rising in the colony. It was supposed that, from their having gone through all the phases of the revolution, and from their official position, they might exercise great influence on the determination which the Spanish government might subsequently take, and it is very natural that a propitiation of their favor should have been sought by those who trembled for their lives, or for the safety of the objects they loved. These three Spanish officers were men capable of sympathizing with the deep anxieties which they saw, and they became painfully affected by the direct and indirect appeals which were repeatedly made to

their feelings. Not knowing what their government intended to do, and careful not to commit themselves to any course of action in their official capacity, they were obliged to act with a considerable degree of caution, imposed upon them by the peculiar circumstances under which they were placed, and they had to confine themselves to mere assurances, as to their personal feelings and wishes, and as to the expectations to be formed from the well-known clemency which was a distinguished feature in the character of Charles III.

Thus matters stood, when on the morning of the 24th of July, 1769, the whole town of New Orleans was thrown into violent commotion by the news that a formidable Spanish fleet had made its appearance at the Balize, that General O'Reilly was the officer whom the court of Madrid had appointed to take possession of Louisiana, and that he brought with him such large forces that any attempt at resistance would be preposterous. Marquis, however, stuck a white cockade in his hat, and appeared on the public square, where he made ineffectual efforts to persuade the people to oppose the landing of the Spaniards. Only one hundred men joined him, and set up the white cockade of France. Petit made his appearance with a pair of pistols in his hands, spoke with the most passionate violence against the Spaniards, whom, he said, the colonists were bound to fight to the last, and declared himself ready to blow out the brains of every coward that would not co-operate in that holy war. But they both soon retired, when they found out that their words met with no sympathizing echo, and that theirs was the voice in the wilderness.

Seeing the hopelessness of their condition, the leaders of the insurgents became greatly alarmed, on being convinced that they could not even make a *show* of resist-

ance, such as perhaps to secure favorable terms of capitulation; and, being humbled by the desperate state to which they were reduced, they sought Aubry to ask for his advice and protection. They were evidently thrown into dismay by the magnitude of the armament which had been fitted out against them, and put under the direction of one of the most skillful generals of Europe. Aubry did all he could to cheer and encourage them; he expressed the belief that General O'Reilly could not possibly come with the intention of carrying terror and desolation through the land, and he observed that, no blood having been spilt, it was to be hoped that the colonists, if they submitted promptly, would not in vain trust the good heart and clemency of his Catholic Majesty. He also promised that he would make them acquainted with O'Reilly's intentions, as soon as he should be informed of them. In the meantime, he ordered them to remain quiet, and they took the engagement to obey his instructions. Then, without loss of time, Aubry despatched an officer to the German Coast, to tranquillize its inhabitants, and to command them in the name of the King, not to stir, under the penalty of being punished as rebels.

The Spanish general whose arrival was soon to be expected, was born in Ireland,\* about the year 1735. He was a Catholic, and following the example of many of his countrymen who belonged to that creed, and who, on that account, labored under many disabilities in their native country, he sought to better his fortunes by enlisting in the armies of one of the continental powers. For this purpose Alexander O'Reilly went to Spain, when very young, and entered the service of the Spanish nation by joining a body of Irishmen known under

\* *Biographie Universelle de Michaud.*

the name of the *Hibernia regiment*. In the war to which gave rise the pretensions of the different princes of Europe to the Austrian succession, on the death of the emperor Charles VI., who left no other lineal descendant than Maria Theresa, O'Reilly served with distinction in Italy, and received a wound which lamed him for the remnant of his days. In 1757, he obtained permission to enter the Austrian army, and, under the orders of his countryman, Field-marshal de Lascy, he made two campaigns against the Prussians. In 1759, he volunteered in the armies of France, and distinguished himself so much, that the Marshal Duke of Broglie warmly recommended him to the King of Spain, when he returned to that country. This recommendation procured for O'Reilly the grade of Lieutenant-colonel, and, as such, he served in Portugal with the Spaniards, against the Portuguese assisted by the English. This war was not glorious for Spain; but O'Reilly obtained great reputation at the head of a body of light troops, which had been intrusted to his command. Even at that time he was reputed one of the best officers in the Spanish armies. Hence he soon rose to the rank of Brigadier-General, and the post of drilling adjutant was created for him. It was in the discharge of these functions that he taught the Spanish troops the German manœuvres and tactics. On the conclusion of the peace treaty signed at Fontainebleau, in 1762, which restored Havana to Spain, he was raised to the rank of Major-General and sent to that city, where he was to be the second in command. He re-established the fortifications of the island of Cuba, and particularly of Havana, which had been ruined by the English, and returned to Spain, where he was appointed Inspector-General of the King's infantry; and Charles III. paid him the compliment of honoring with his pres-

ence the operations of a camp of exercise, of which he gave him the command. He was next sent to New Orleans, in 1769, where I shall have to relate in details the part which he acted. In 1765, General O'Reilly, by his presence of mind, the rapidity of his movements, and his cool intrepidity, had had the good luck to save the King's life in the famous Madrid insurrection which forced the sovereign to fly to Aranjuez. From that time he continued to rise in the favor of a monarch who was well known for the persevering and extraordinary gratitude which he always cherished for all services rendered to his person. Although O'Reilly, as a foreigner, had excited antipathies and jealousies which threw many impediments in his way, yet his merits could not but be acknowledged, and it was admitted that the Spanish armies were indebted to him for many useful reforms and marked improvements. He was made a Count, and his breast glittered with military decorations.

In 1774, he was given the command of the great expedition which Spain undertook against Algiers, and which was composed of forty ships of the line, three hundred and fifty transports, and thirty thousand men; but this immense convoy did not arrive in time; and O'Reilly not receiving, when wanted, the flat boats which had been prepared to facilitate a simultaneous landing of the whole of his forces, and after having waited fifteen days, in daily danger of running his vessels aground, was obliged to resort to a partial landing of his troops, and put out a body of ten thousand men, commanded by the Marquis of La Romana. This corps had been ordered so to establish itself on the shore, as to protect the landing of the rest of the army. But La Romana, carried away by his own impetuosity, and by that of his men, pursued the vanguard of the enemy to

a point in the interior where he had to contend with very superior numbers, intrenched behind fig trees and hedges of nopals. The Spanish troops fought with undaunted courage, and lost four thousand men, with their chief La Romana. During that time the rest of the army was landing; but this first check had demoralized the troops; the reluctance which they had to serve under a foreigner was fast ripening into a spirit of sedition; it was maliciously circulated that O'Reilly had sacrificed La Romana, of whom he was said to be jealous; and he discovered that he no longer had at his command the proper elements to secure success. Under these circumstances, he found it necessary to return to his ships, and he went back to Spain with much grief at the frustration of his hopes. His only consolation was that the plan of attack he had conceived was approved by all the judges of military art, and that the bravery he had displayed was much admired. His enemies themselves admitted, that he had shown himself wherever there was most danger, during the engagement with the Algerines, that he had exposed his person with the utmost recklessness, and that the horse he mounted had received two wounds. The unfortunate result of this expedition lowered him, however, in the estimation of the Spanish nation; but the King remained true to him and put him at the head of a military school lately established. He was afterwards appointed Commander-general of the province of Andalusia and governor of Cadix, where he exhibited all the talents of a great administrator. But, at the death of Charles III., in December, 1788, he fell into complete disfavor, and lived in absolute retirement in the province of Catalonia. His name had, nevertheless, retained considerable influence in the Spanish armies; and, after the death of General Ricardos, in



1794, he was thought to be the most skillful general to be opposed to the French. He was therefore appointed to the command of the army of the East Pyrenees, and he was on his way to his destination, when he died suddenly at an advanced age. His descendants now reside in the island of Cuba. "General O'Reilly," says Michaud in his biographical sketch of that officer, "had always been an object of malignant envy, and had many enemies, whom the flexibility of his temper and the gentleness of his conciliating manners could not reconcile to his advancement among a nation proverbially proud and suspicious of foreigners."

It was, as I said, on the morning of the 24th of July, that the inhabitants of New Orleans were informed of the arrival of O'Reilly at the Balize. In the evening there came the intelligence that a Spanish officer, bearing despatches from O'Reilly to Aubry, was ascending the river. There was, on that night, no thought of sleep for the greater part of the population, and they were seen clustering in groups in the streets, or hurrying from house to house. At about ten o'clock, Loyola, Gayarre, and Navarro, preceded by torches and followed by their subordinates, friends and adherents, were observed traversing the town, and moving towards the landing place. At eleven, the Spanish envoy, whose name was Francisco Bouligny, arrived in front of the public square, and, leaping ashore, was greeted by his countrymen, to whom he was a token of speedy relief. Passing through the large and anxious crowd that had gathered round them in silence, the Spanish officers went to the house of the French governor, who had retired to bed. He was immediately waked up according to the instructions which he had left, and he received with much affability O'Reilly's messenger, who delivered to him the letter of



one he could take. On that day, the Spanish officers dined again at Aubry's with some of the former chief conspirators, and then Bouligny departed with Lafrénière, Marquis, Milhet, the harbor master, and the oldest commissioned captain in the French troops, whom Aubry sent, the one, to pilot O'Reilly's vessels through the pass at the Balize, and the other to compliment his Excellency, as is customary on such occasions.

After forty hours' navigation, Don Francisco Bouligny reached the Balize, and presented Lafrénière and his companions to O'Reilly, who received them in state on the deck of the flag ship, which was crowded with a host of officers who had come from the other vessels to witness the scene. Lafrénière was to be the spokesman of his party, but, when introduced to the presence of O'Reilly, he felt one of those sudden emotions from which the boldest heart is not free on occasions of peculiar solemnity, and his powers of speech failed him for a moment; but encouraged, however, by the benignant expression which he observed in O'Reilly's face, he soon rallied, and in a somewhat faltering voice delivered the following address, which O'Reilly ordered Bouligny to take down: "Excellency, Mr. Marquis, an ex-captain of a Swiss company, Mr. Milhet, a lieutenant of militia and a merchant, and I, Lafrénière, a planter, and the King's attorney-general, have been chosen as delegates by the inhabitants of Louisiana, and requested to come and assure your Excellency of their submission to the orders of their Catholic and most Christian Majesties, and of their veneration for the virtues and military talents which have raised you to the eminent dignities with which you are clothed. We are instructed to express to you the profound respect of the colony for his Catholic Majesty, and its love for his Most Christian Majesty, and for all the august house of Bourbon. The colony never

had the intention to be wanting in the profound respect which it cherishes for the great monarch whom you represent. The harshness of Mr. Ulloa's temper, and the subversion of the privileges guaranteed by the act of cession, were the only causes of the revolution which took place in the colony. We beg your Excellency not to consider Louisiana as a conquered country. The orders of which you are the bearer are sufficient to put you in possession of this province, and they make a greater impression on our hearts than the arms which you carry with you. The French are docile, and accustomed to a mild government. On your arrival, you will find every one disposed to yield obedience to the orders of the two majesties. The colony claims from your benevolence the grant of privileges, and from your equity, the allowance of sufficient delays for those who may choose to emigrate."

Don Alexandro O'Reilly\* listened to this address without interrupting the orator, and with the grave and imposing aspect, said an eye-witness, which his rank and dignity required. He then answered: "Gentlemen, it is impossible to judge of facts and events, without having previously obtained a sufficient knowledge of their causes. On my arrival in your town, I shall take special care to become acquainted with the whole truth, to form right conclusions, and to examine the reasons alleged for your justification. You may rest assured that no one can be better disposed than I am, to render good services to the colonists, and that my doing the least injury to any one would be to me a matter of deep regret.† I shall

\* Don Alexandro O'Reilly escuchó esta arenga sin interrumpirla, con la seriedad y señorío correspondiente á su caracter.

† Yo seré el primero en facilitar á los medios para que tranquilizen á todo el pueblo, asegurando le de las buenas disposiciones en que me hallo llevado de mi caracter.

be the first to furnish you with all the means I may possibly dispose of, to enable you to tranquillize the people; and you may assure them of the good dispositions with which I am animated, and which are natural to my character. I see with pleasure the resolution which you have taken. Had it not been so, you may well be persuaded that I would have caused the flag of my king to be respected, and that, to accomplish it, I would have allowed no consideration to arrest me in my course. Such was my determination, and I would have ascended the river as high as the Illinois, if necessary. Men, when in a state of frenzy, do not reflect, and cannot see the consequences of their actions. If it were not so, how could a handful of people, like you, have imagined themselves capable of resisting one of the most powerful sovereigns of Europe? How could you think that the Most Christian King, bound to the King my master by the ties of blood and by those of the closest friendship, could ever have assisted you, and lent a willing ear to the clamors of a seditious people?"

Here, Marquis interrupted the General, to object to the application of the word *seditious*, and to give some reasons in explanation of the course pursued by the colonists. The General answered with gentle condescension: "Be at ease;\* I have already told you, gentlemen, that I will listen with pleasure to your arguments, when the time shall come. God be praised, I am free from all prejudices, and I am aware that things, which from afar may look as if they were clothed with the dark hue of guilt, may, at a shorter distance, appear decked in the white robes of innocence."

\* El General le respondió con dulzura—Ya he dicho a Vs, Señores, que á un tiempo escucharé con gusto las razones de Vs. A Dios gracias, estoy libre de preocupaciones, y no ignoro que muchas veces las cosas que parecen negras desde lejos, suelen verse blancas, quando uno se aproxima.

The General detained them to dine with him, treated them with the most delicate politeness, with the utmost suavity of manner, and sent them back, says Bouligny, one of the persons present at the interview, *full of admiration for his talents, and with good hopes that their past faults shall be forgotten.*

O'Reilly, in order to have proper quarters prepared for his troops, sent back Bouligny to New Orleans, with two other officers named Karbonary and Bordenave.

On the 15th of August, Aubry went down the river, to offer his respects to O'Reilly, who was on his way up, and to come to an understanding with him as to the manner and time of taking possession of the colony. On consultation, they fixed the 18th for that ceremony. On the 16th, Aubry returned to New Orleans, and issued a proclamation enjoining the inhabitants of the town and the most respectable among those of the neighboring country, to be at the *august ceremony, and to be ready to present themselves to his Excellency, Don Alexandro O'Reilly, in order to assure him of their entire submission and of their inviolable fidelity to his Catholic Majesty.* On the 17th, in the morning, the whole Spanish fleet, numbering twenty-four sails, appeared in front of New Orleans. Immediately all the necessary preparations were made for landing, and flying bridges were dropped from the vessels to the bank of the river. On the 18th, early in the day, the French governor, with a numerous train of officers, came to compliment the new governor, who went ashore in company with his visitors, and proceeded with them to the house which was destined for him. But before 12 o'clock, O'Reilly returned to his fleet, in order to prepare for the landing of the whole of his forces.

At 5 o'clock in the afternoon, a gun fired by the flag

ship gave the signal for the landing of the Spaniards. The French troops and the militia of the colony, with Aubry at their head, were already drawn up in a line parallel to the river, and in front of the ships, in that part of the public square which is nearest to the church. On the signal being heard, the Spanish troops were seen pouring out of the fleet in solid columns, and moving with admirable precision to the points which had been designated to them. These troops, numbering 2,600 men, were among the choicest of Spain, and had been picked by O'Reilly himself. With colors flying, and with the rapidity of motion of the most practised veterans, they marched on, battalions after battalions, exciting the admiration and the awe of the population by their martial aspect and their brilliant equipments. The heavy infantry drew themselves up in perpendiculars, on the right and left wings of the French, thus forming three sides of a square. Then came a heavy train of artillery of fifty guns, the light infantry, and the companies of mountain riflemen, (*fusileros de montañas*,) with the cavalry, which was composed of forty dragoons, and fifty mounted militia men from Havana. All these corps occupied the fourth side of the square near the river, and in front of the French, who were drawn up near the cathedral. All the vessels were dressed in their colors, and their riggings were alive with the Spanish sailors in their holiday apparel. On a sudden, they gave five long and loud shouts of: *Viva el Rey—Long live the King*, to which the troops in the square responded in a similar manner. All the bells of the town pealed merrily; a simultaneous discharge from the guns of the twenty-four Spanish vessels enveloped the river in smoke; with emulous rapidity the fifty guns that were on the square roared out their salute, making the ground tremble as

if convulsed with an earthquake; all along the dark lines of the Spanish infantry flashed a sheet of fire; and the weaker voice of musketry, also shouting in jubilation, attempted to vie with the thunder of artillery. All this pomp and circumstance of war announced that General O'Reilly was landing.

He soon appeared in the square, where he was received with all the honors due to a captain general, drums beating, banners waving, and all sorts of musical instruments straining their brazen throats, and by their wild and soul stirring sounds causing the heart to leap, and the blood to run electrically through the hot veins. He was preceded by splendidly accoutred men, who bore heavy silver maces; and the whole of his retinue, which was of the most imposing character, was well calculated to strike the imagination of the people. With a slightly halting gait he advanced towards the French governor, who, with the members of the Council and all the men of note in the colony, stood near a mast which supported the flag of France. Immediately behind O'Reilly followed the officers of the colonial administration of Louisiana, Don Joseph Loyola, the commissary of war and intendant; Don Estevan Gayarre, the contador, or royal comptroller; and Martin Navarro, the treasurer, who were to be restored to their respective functions, which had been interrupted by the revolution. "Sir," said O'Reilly to Aubry, "I have already communicated to you the orders and the credentials with which I am provided, to take possession of this colony in the name of his Catholic Majesty, and also the instructions of his Most Christian Majesty that it be delivered up to me. I beg you to read them aloud to the people." Aubry complied with this request, and then, addressing the colonists by whom he was surrounded, said: "Gentlemen,

you have just heard the sacred orders of their Most Christian and Catholic Majesties in relation to the province of Louisiana, which is irrevocably ceded to the crown of Spain. From this moment you are the subjects of his Catholic Majesty, and by virtue of the orders of the King, my master, I absolve you from your oath of fidelity and obedience to his Most Christian Majesty." Then turning to O'Reilly, Aubry handed to him the keys of the gates of the town. The banner of France sunk from the head of the mast where it waved, and was replaced by that of Spain.\* Following the example and the orders of Aubry, the French shouted five times: "*Viva el Rey!*" *Long live the King!*—which was repeated three times by the Spanish troops, who recommenced their firing in unison with the fleet.

Then O'Reilly, followed by the principal Spanish officers, and accompanied by Aubry and his retinue, proceeded to the cathedral, where he was received at the threshold by the clergy, with all the honors of the Pallium† and with the other usual solemnities.‡ The curate or Vicar General, in the name and on behalf of the people, addressed to the general a pathetic harangue, coupled with the most caressing protestations of fidelity on his part. The General answered with concise eloquence, declaring his readiness to protect religion, to cause the ministers of the sanctuary to be respected, to support the authority of the King and the honor of his arms, to devote himself to the public good, and to do

\* Los Franceses, dirigidos por su Gobernador, dieron cinco veces: Viva el Rey! Nuestra tropa lo ejecutó très veces con una descarga graneada, y al mismo tiempo que la salva de la fregata comandante.

† A sort of canopy, under which the Chase of the Eucharist is carried in processions.

‡ El cura ó Vicario principal hizo á S. E. una arenga muy patética en nombre del pueblo, y con las mas tiernas protestas de fidelidad.



justice to all. He then entered the church, where a Te Deum was sung, during which the troops and the fleet renewed their discharges in token of rejoicing.

When the pious ceremony was over, O'Reilly and Aubry returned to the public square, where all the Spanish troops filed off before the governors *in the most redoubtable order and equipage*, says Aubry in one of his despatches, and, after having saluted them, retired to their respective quarters.

In a despatch in which, some time after the taking possession of the country by the Spaniards, he rendered to one of the French ministers an account of the events which had preceded, and of the results which had followed, O'Reilly's arrival in Louisiana, Aubry says: "In circumstances so deplorable, without troops, without money, without resources, without assistance, having against me the Superior Council and the great majority of the inhabitants, I thought that in order not to ruin this colony, it was necessary to act with the utmost reserve. I concluded that it was my duty to endeavor to the best of my abilities to prevent the effusion of French and Spanish blood, and to preserve this unfortunate country in its integrity, until it be possible to cause its population to respect the orders of their Catholic and Most Christian Majesties, determined, however, as I was, to perish with the few officers and soldiers who had remained under my orders, when the fury and violence of the rebels should drive me to the last extremities, and put me under the indispensable necessity of meeting them in battle.

"At the very moment when all seemed to be lost, Providence took compassion of our calamities, and when we were near being submerged by the storm, sent us a liberator, who, by his mere presence and by his wisdom,



has in an instant re-established order and tranquillity in a country, which had been so long in an indescribable state of disorder and confusion.

“After having experienced the most terrible alarms and afflictions in governing a colony, which I several times saw on the very brink of ruin and destruction, it has been my good luck, by the grace of God, to deliver it in its integrity into the hands of a General, to whose presence, wisdom and firmness it is now indebted for its tranquillity. Listening with the greatest kindness to those who have any business to transact with him, he fills with hope and satisfaction all the inhabitants, who, after so many disturbances and disorders, see at last the restoration of peace and justice in the country. The thanks which the General was pleased to address to me at the head of my troops, and in presence of the whole people, and the approbation which he expressed of my conduct during all those unfortunate occurrences of the past, are to me a sure pledge of its obtaining also the sanction of your excellency.”

On the 19th, the day following the ceremony of taking possession, O'Reilly gave with great pomp a dinner to the French Governor, the Spanish and French authorities, and all the persons of distinction in the colony. In the mean time, with his customary habits of activity, he had not allowed these festivities of the preceding and of the present day to interfere with the business which he had on hand, and he had proceeded in secret to take the depositions of witnesses as to what had occurred in the colony, and to peruse all the papers and documents which could give the desired information on the subject. On the very day he thus entertained Aubry and some of the chiefs of the revolution, he addressed to that officer the following letter : “Sir, as you witnessed all that oc-

curred in this colony, when Don Antonio de Ulloa, appointed governor of the same by his Catholic Majesty, was expelled from it, I beg you to enlighten me on the subject, to make me acquainted with all those events and their true causes, and to furnish me with the names of the persons who induced the people to commit the offence of presenting themselves with arms in their hands to enforce the violent expulsion of Don Antonio de Ulloa, and to renew the same excesses against all the Spanish officers and troops in the colony.

“As Governor of this colony for his Most Christian Majesty, and as the commander of the French troops, you recognized Don Antonio de Ulloa as the person designated by his Catholic Majesty to take, in his royal name, full possession and command of this colony. Consequently, you gave to Ulloa possession of the Balize and of other posts, and the complete cession was deferred, only at the solicitation of Ulloa himself, until the arrival of the Spanish force which he expected; a proof of confidence on your part, which was due to the close union existing between the two crowns.

“It is expedient that you have the kindness to communicate to me, as soon as possible, all that you may know in relation to said revolution, without omitting to quote literally all the orders, protests, and public or secret documents to which you may have had recourse, in order to reduce to, and to keep within, the bounds of duty, the chiefs and agents of the conspiracy.

“It is very essential that I should know who is the person who wrote, printed and circulated the document having for its title: *Decree of the Council, dated October, 1768*, and under what authority this was done. I desire the same information with regard to the other document entitled: *Memorial of the inhabitants of Louisiana on the*

*event of the 29th October, 1768, because all the articles of said documents claim my special attention. I shall put entire faith in your communications, and I again beg you not to omit any circumstance relative to men and things, in what concerns said revolution."*

On the 20th, without losing sight of the object of his investigations, O'Reilly went to pay a formal visit to the French governor, with the whole body of Spanish officers.\* On that very day, Aubry answered the communication which he had received from O'Reilly on the preceding one. Aubry's letter is a very long document, in which he designates all the chiefs of the revolution, and relates minutely their respective shares in that event. No attorney general could have drawn a more precise and more fatal indictment. He concludes in these words: "I will communicate to your Excellency all the decrees, memorials, and other pieces of iniquity which were fabricated in those times of disturbances and disorders. I will deliver into your hands all the protests which I made against such injustices. My conduct shall be laid bare before the most equitable and the most enlightened of judges. His approbation, which I dare flatter myself to deserve, will be the greatest honor and the handsomest reward which I can ever receive." This communication, which is a model of humility, if not servility, does not redound to the credit of Aubry. Far from interceding in favor of his unfortunate fellow citizens, far from endeavouring to palliate their guilt, which he could have done without deviating from truth, he arraigns them with bitter asperity, and is certainly answerable, to a considerable degree, for the shedding of the blood of those he had accused with such violence. If he had contented

\* Sin abandonar dicho cuidado, fué á visitar al gobernador frances con todo el cuerpo de oficiales nuestros.

himself with this brief answer: "The King of France, my master, appointed me governor of this colony, and I cannot believe that the King of Spain wishes to convert me into a common informer," he, perhaps, would have stood higher in the estimation of O'Reilly himself, and undoubtedly, in that of posterity.

On receiving Aubry's communication, O'Reilly's mind was immediately made up. On the next day, the 21st, he communicated to Aubry, at eight o'clock in the morning, the orders of his Catholic Majesty to arrest and bring to trial, in accordance with the laws, the chiefs of the revolution. Aubry, in one of his despatches, says that he never suspected before that O'Reilly had been invested with any such powers. The Spanish Governor, without loss of time, whilst Aubry was with him, drew to his house, under different pretexts, nine of the leaders of the late insurrection, and had three others, of an inferior rank, arrested in the town hall. They were Nicolas Chauvin de Lafrénière, Jean Baptiste de Noyan, Joseph Villeré, Pierre Caresse, Pierre Marquis, Joseph Milhet, Jean Milhet, Joseph Petit, Balthasar de Masan, Julien Jerome Doucet, Pierre Poupet, and Hardy de Boisblanc. When they were all in his presence, and Aubry standing by, he thus addressed them: "Gentlemen, the Spanish nation is respected and venerated all over the globe. Louisiana seems to be the only country which is not aware of it, and which is deficient in the respect due to that nation. His Catholic Majesty is much displeased at the violence which was lately exercised in this province, and at the offence which was committed against his governor, his officers and his troops. He has been irritated by the writings which have been printed, and which revile his government and the Spanish nation. He orders me to have arrested and tried, according to

the laws of the kingdom, the authors of these excesses and of all these deeds of violence."

After having read to them the orders of his Catholic Majesty which prescribed to him the course he was pursuing, he added: "Gentlemen, I regret to say, that you are accused of being the authors of the late insurrection. I therefore arrest you in the King's name. My earnest wish is, that you may prove your innocence, and that I may soon set you free again. Here are your judges (pointing to some officers who were in the room). They are as equitable as they are learned, and they will listen to your defence.\* The only part which I shall take in the trial will be, to favor you as much as I may be permitted. In the mean time, all your property, according to the custom of Spain with regard to prisoners of state, shall be sequestered. But you may rest assured that you shall be treated as well as possible in the places where you shall be respectively confined. As to your wives and children, be persuaded that I shall grant them all the assistance of which they may stand in need. In relation to the sequestration of your estates and effects, a faithful inventory shall be made of them, and I invite each of you now to appoint whom he pleases, to be present on his behalf at that inventory, and every person so appointed by you shall also countersign the inventory of your papers."

He paused for an answer; and the unfortunate prisoners, after they had somewhat recovered from the first shock they had felt at such a proceeding, gave, according to O'Reilly's invitation, the names of those who were to represent them, and a list of those names was made on

\* Dijó que S. E. no tomaria otra parte en esta causa (cuyos jueces estaban alli presentes, y les hizo ver), que la que fuese conducente á favorecerlos, y que deseaba que todos pudiesen justificar, plenamente su conducta.

the spot. "Now, gentlemen," resumed O'Reilly, "please to deliver up your swords." Whilst this scene was acting, the whole house had been surrounded by troops, and the rooms had been filling up with grenadiers. One of O'Reilly's aids received the swords of the prisoners, and some officers of grenadiers, courteously taking them arm in arm, placed them between two companies of grenadiers, and thus conducted them to their places of confinement, where they were all separated from each other. Some were put in the frigate in which O'Reilly had come, some in two of the other vessels, and the rest in a well-guarded house. It was ordered that they should be interrogated, and their depositions be taken down in writing, and that they be allowed all the conveniences they might want, provided they be not permitted to communicate with each other, nor with any body else. On rendering an account of this event to the French ministry, Aubry said: "I have the honor to forward to you a list of the small number of those whom the General was indispensably obliged to have arrested. This proves his generosity and the kindness of his heart, considering that there are many others whose criminal conduct would have justified their being treated in the same manner."

With regard to Villeré, it seems that he had been the only one who had prepared to fly with his family and negroes, when he had heard of the arrival of the Spaniards. His plan was to retire to Manchac, under the protection of the English flag. But, either being deceived as some say by a letter from Aubry, who pledged himself for his safety, or believing, when he was informed of the kind reception made to his associates in the late revolution, that it was not the intention of the Spanish government to act with rigor, he gave up his original design and came to town from the German Coast, to pre-

sent himself to the General and ascertain the true state of things. He was one of those who were confined in the frigate. Being of an exceedingly violent temper, this sudden blasting of his hopes threw him,\* as the Spanish official report says, into such a fit of frenzy, that he died raving mad on the day of his arrest. Bossu, in his work on Louisiana, gives a different version, but he is so fanciful in all his relations of pretended facts, that he is hardly to be believed. Judge Martin, in his history of Louisiana, gives a third version, and says: "He (Villeré) was immediately conveyed on board of a frigate that lay at the levee. On hearing of this, his lady, a granddaughter of De Lachaise, the former commissary general and *ordonnateur*, hastened to the city. As her boat approached the frigate she was hailed and ordered away. She made herself known, and solicited admission to her husband, but was answered she could not see him, as the captain was on shore and had left orders that no communication should be allowed with the prisoner. Villeré recognized his wife's voice, and insisted on being permitted to see her. On this being refused, a struggle ensued, in which he fell pierced by the bayonets of his guards. His bloody shirt thrown into the boat announced to the lady that she had ceased to be a wife; and a sailor cut the rope that fastened the boat to the frigate." This atrocity of the bloody shirt is not probable. It is not mentioned in the official French despatches which I have seen, and rests only on popular tradition, which delights in tales of similar exaggeration. It has, no doubt, been preserved and handed down on account of the dramatic effect which it produces, and which has made it acceptable to the imagination.

It is impossible to describe the terror which the arrest

\*Murió al 1° día de su prision, de terror y enojo, y antes perdió el juicio.



of these men and the death of Villeré scattered far and wide. They were so much identified with the whole population, their personal friends were so numerous, their family connections so extensive, that the misfortune which had befallen them could not but produce a general desolation. Besides, every one trembled for his own life, or for the safety of others, and many, in secret, began to make immediate preparations to fly to the English. In New Orleans, the doors of the majority of the houses were closed, and the inhabitants deserted the streets, which resounded only with the heavy tramp of Spanish patrols. On the 22d of August, the day following the arrest of Lafrénière and his companions, O'Reilly, in order to dissipate the fears which agitated the population, had this proclamation posted up at the public square and at the corner of every street:

“IN THE NAME OF THE KING,

“We, Alexander O'Reilly, Commander of Benfayan in the order of Alcantara, Major General and Inspector General of the armies of his Catholic Majesty, Captain General and Governor of the Province of Louisiana, in virtue of his Catholic Majesty's orders, and of the powers with which we are invested, declare to all the inhabitants of the Province of Louisiana, that, whatever just cause past events may have given his Majesty to make them feel his indignation, yet his majesty's intention is to listen only to the inspirations of his royal clemency, because he is persuaded that the inhabitants of Louisiana would not have committed the offence of which they are guilty, if they had not been seduced by the intrigues of some ambitious, fanatic and evil-minded men, who had the temerity to make a criminal use of the ignorance, and excessive credulity of their fellow citizens. These men

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alone will answer for their crimes, and will be judged in accordance with the laws.

“So generous an act on the part of his Majesty must be a pledge to him that his new subjects will endeavor, every day of their lives, to deserve by their fidelity, zeal and obedience, the pardon and protection which he grants them from this moment.” This proclamation made more than one breast breathe freely, and diminished to some degree, the feeling of terror which had been produced by the events of the preceding day.

On the 23d, O'Reilly issued another proclamation inviting the inhabitants of the town and its vicinity to appear before him, at his house, on the 26th, at seven o'clock in the morning, to take their solemn oath of vassalage and fealty to the new sovereign. Those of the inhabitants who resided in distant settlements were informed that, on certain days to be fixed hereafter, and before certain officers to be appointed for this special purpose, they would have to appear in their turn, and to go through the same ceremony. O'Reilly also wrote to Aubry a letter, in which he told him that he had perused the original of the document entitled: “*Memorial of the planters, merchants, and other inhabitants of Louisiana, on the event of the 29th of October, 1768*,” which was found in possession of the printer Braud, with an order signed by the Commissary Foucault, authorizing the publication; that he considered this document as a libel injurious in the highest degree to the authority of the King, and derogatory to the respect due to his royal person, that it was defamatory of the Spanish nation; and that Foucault's crime being fully proved by his signature, there could remain no doubt but that he was one of the chiefs of the late insurrection, and one of the principal authors of the excesses committed against Don Antonio de Ulloa

and the government of his Catholic Majesty, wherefore he begged Governor Aubry to have Foucault arrested with the greatest precaution and promptitude, in order that the most unfaithful and criminal conduct of that officer being investigated, both he, O'Reilly, and Aubry, should be able to lay before their respective sovereigns full copies of the proceedings of the trial to which he would be submitted. This request took Aubry by surprise; but he complied with it readily, although he says, *that it caused him a great deal of grief*. He sent Major de Grand-Maison, Captain de Lamazelière, and Adjutant Major Aubert, to arrest Foucault in the name of the King of France, in the house where this Commissary resided, and which was to be his prison. There, with the approbation of O'Reilly, he was guarded by a French detachment and two officers, whom Aubry made personally responsible for the safe keeping of the prisoner. As a measure of precaution, Foucault's guard was to be changed every day. Grand-Maison, assisted by Lamazelière and Aubert, and in the presence of Bobé, the Marine Comptroller, put the seals on Foucault's papers. Bobé was appointed by Aubry to fulfil the functions of Foucault. "I told him," says Aubry to the French government, "that I would hold him answerable for all the harm that he might do, although I think that he is incapable of doing wrong, because he is an honest man, and has always blamed the conduct of his superior" (Foucault).

On the 25th, O'Reilly was engaged in issuing several provisional decrees in relation to securing immediately the faithful and prompt administration of justice, and chose among the inhabitants those who were reputed the most intelligent and honest, to call them to the discharge of those judicial functions which the good of the country required.

On the 26th, the ceremony of taking the oath of allegiance was performed, as it had been prescribed. It began with the clergy, to whom precedence was allowed, and so on, through all the classes of the population. "This ceremony," wrote Aubry, "was conducted with much order and dignity. I presented to the General every corps, company, or corporation, according to its rank. The General explained to them, in a loud voice, all the obligations to which they would be subjected by their oath; he told them that they were fully and entirely free to take, or not to take it; that those who should not be disposed to assume such an engagement, were the masters of their own decision, and that he would give them all the time and all the necessary facilities to arrange their affairs, and to retire to their country. Almost all the inhabitants took the oath with zeal, and I dare assert that they will, henceforth, be as faithful subjects to his Catholic Majesty, as they were to the Most Christian King. After the ceremony was over, I approached the Spanish Governor with the whole body of the French officers, and I told him that we deemed it a compliment and an honor to serve under the orders of so distinguished a general as he was; that we were ready to shed our blood for the service of the King of Spain, just as willingly as for the King of France; and that, in so doing, we would merely execute the will of the King, our master, which was all that he wished. He was completely satisfied with this demonstration, and answered us in the most obliging manner."

On the 27th, the Acadians and Germans who, although they had made all possible haste to reach New Orleans on the 26th, had not been able to accomplish their object, were admitted to take their oath of allegiance, and were immediately sent back to their rural occupations.

On the 28th, the Spanish troops were engaged in landing from the fleet all the ammunition, provisions, and other materials and effects of which it had brought an ample supply. On that day, by the order of Aubry, Major de Grand-maison, with Captains Lamazelière and Trudeau, assisted by the notary Garic, and in the presence of Bobé, the marine comptroller, proceeded to raise the seals which had been affixed in Foucault's house, and to inventory all the papers relative to his office, and which were to be handed to Bobé, his successor. "I had also ordered the same officer," wrote Aubry, "to require of Foucault a declaration under oath, of all the movable and immovable property he owned in the colony. It appears from his own showing that he owns little or nothing, and has a heavy amount of debts, both in France and in this colony."

Although the preceding operations had given much occupation to General O'Reilly, he did not neglect to inform himself minutely of all the wants of the colony. He despatched messengers to all the distant settlements, to convey official intelligence of his arrival, and of his having taken formal possession of the province, and to authorize their commanders, to receive the oath of allegiance of all the inhabitants residing within their jurisdiction. He requested them also to state what they desired to supply the necessities of their respective posts.

"His intention," wrote Aubry, "is to introduce no innovations but those which may be absolutely necessary. He will maintain and cause to be executed all the wise and useful regulations which the government, on account of its weakness, had not been able to enforce for several years back. He will keep in force the Black Code, which, he thinks, contains excellent provisions, not only with regard to the discipline which it establishes among

the negroes, but also in relation to the moderation which it prescribes to masters, in the treatment of their slaves. This has infinitely pleased the inhabitants. I have the honor to transmit to you the ordinance which he has issued on this subject.

“Finally, after so many disturbances and disorders which had so long desolated this colony, it is surprising that the mere presence of one individual should, in so short a time, have restored good order, peace and tranquillity. Had it been the good fortune of this province that General O'Reilly had arrived sooner, it would never have felt all the calamities it has endured. With the exception of a small number of families which are in a state of consternation, on account of what has so justly befallen some of their members who have been arrested, all the rest of the colonists are quiet and satisfied. They are grateful to his Catholic Majesty for having sent them a governor who listens with kindness to those who have any business with him, and who, although respected and feared, is not the less loved for his generosity, his magnanimity and his equity, of which all of us feel the effects. He will make the happiness of this colony.”

On the 5th of October, Aubry, at the request of O'Reilly, proceeded to the interrogation of Foucault, who declined answering, on the ground that whatever he had done, was in his official capacity of commissary of the King of France and in his name; that to his government alone he was answerable, and that, as he had not seen any order of arrest issued against him by his Most Christian Majesty, he protested against the decrees of which he was the object, and excepted to the jurisdiction of any Spanish tribunal over acts which he had done officially, in the name of the King of France, and on his behalf. Several attempts were made to induce

him to undergo an examination, but he remained obstinately silent on those occasions. He merely said that he was willing to stand his trial in France, and he repeatedly asked to be sent thither. Upon consideration, it was thought proper to comply with his request, and, on the 14th of October, he was embarked for France, where, on his arrival, he was thrown into the Bastile.

Speaking of Foucault in a letter written to the Marquis of Grimaldi, O'Reilly says: "He is a conceited and narrow-minded man, who has cheated a host of people here, as demonstrated by the amount of debts which he leaves." Indeed it appears from Foucault's own statement of his affairs, that his debts exceeded his worldly goods by twenty-seven thousand dollars, which was a pretty considerable sum at that epoch. The schedule of his debts proves, that he had even possessed the art of duping those whose destruction or expulsion from the colony he had aimed at; for the Spanish Contador, Don Estevan Gayarre, is put down for \$780 on the list of his private creditors.

Braud had also been arrested for having printed the memorial of the planters, merchants, etc., of Louisiana on the event of the 29th of October, 1768. But he pleaded in justification that, as the King's printer, he was bound by the tenure of his office to print all that was sent to him by the King's commissary, and he showed Foucault's signature at the bottom of the manuscript which he had published. This defence was admitted as good, and he was set free.

This was the prelude to the great trial which was soon to begin, and which, ending with the shedding of the blood of men who were loved and respected, whatever their faults may have been, left a deep and indelible impression in the annals of the colony.

## SEVENTH LECTURE.

A STATE TRIAL IN 1760, AND ONE IN 1851—INDICTMENT AND ARGUMENTS PRESENTED BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL DON FELIX DEL REY AGAINST LAFRÉNIÈRE AND THE OTHER CONSPIRATORS—THEIR DEFENCE—REFLECTIONS ON THE RIGHT WHICH THE COLONISTS HAD TO RESIST THE CESSION—QUOTATIONS FROM VATTTEL'S LAW OF NATIONS—JUDGMENT AGAINST THE ACCUSED—SOME OF THEM ARE SENTENCED TO THE GALLOWES, AND OTHERS TO IMPRISONMENT—VAIN EFFORTS TO OBTAIN A RESPITE FROM O'REILLY—O'REILLY DISPOSED TO CONNIVE AT THE FLIGHT OF NOYAN, WHO REFUSES TO AVAIL HIMSELF OF THIS FAVORABLE CIRCUMSTANCE—WANT OF A WHITE HANGMAN IN THE COLONY—ANECDOTE OF THE BLACK, JEANNOT, TO WHOM THESE FUNCTIONS WERE TENDERED—FOR WANT OF A WHITE MAN, AS PUBLIC EXECUTIONER, THE ACCUSED, WHO WERE SENTENCED TO BE HUNG, ARE SHOT—THE MEMORIAL OF THE PLANTERS, MERCHANTS AND OTHER INHABITANTS OF LOUISIANA ON THE EVENT OF THE 29TH OF OCTOBER, 1768, IS BURNT ON THE PUBLIC SQUARE—THE SON OF MASAN GOES TO SPAIN, AND THROWS HIMSELF AT THE FEET OF THE KING—HE OBTAINS THE PARDON OF HIS FATHER AND OF THE OTHER PRISONERS—AUBRY, ON HIS RETURN TO FRANCE, IS SHIPWRECKED AND LOST—ANECDOTES OF THE SLAVES ARTUS AND CUPIDO—THEIR HEROIC ANSWER TO O'REILLY—O'REILLY'S DESPATCH TO GRIMALDI, IN RELATION TO THE TRIAL, THE JUDGMENT AND ITS EXECUTION—AUBRY'S LETTER ON THE SAME SUBJECT—REFLECTIONS ON THE COURSE PURSUED BY O'REILLY—AN ANECDOTE OF CARDINAL RICHELIEU AND DE THOU, APPLIED TO O'REILLY—SEQUESTRATION AND CONFISCATION OF THE PROPERTY OF THE CULPRITS—COST OF THE TRIAL—INVENTORY OF SAID PROPERTY—DESCRIPTION OF THE FURNITURE OF THE WEALTHIEST HOUSES IN LOUISIANA, 1769—SPARTAN SIMPLICITY—DESCRIPTION OF THE DWELLINGS, MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE COLONISTS AT THE TIME—CENSUS OF THE COLONY—ITS COMMERCE, AGRICULTURE AND FINANCES—FINAL REFLECTIONS.

If twelve among the most distinguished citizens of Louisiana were now brought to trial for high treason, as they were in 1760, it would require no effort of the imagination to conceive and portray the scenes that would be the natural consequences of such an event. What an excitement there would be through the vast length and



breadth of the land! What an array of friends, family connexions, wealth, talent and social influence, rushing to the rescue! What passionate discussions in every place of public resort, and in the sanctuary of every man's household! Could that queen of the mind, to whom none so high as not to do her reverence, and none so low as to be beyond the reach of her care and power, could the press remain impassive, when subjected to the thousand currents of electricity that would play upon her! Would she not, like a mirror, be compelled to reflect the passions of the multitude around, and be exposed, under the pressure of the moment, to be broken and divided into fragments, representing perhaps the antagonistical images of prosecution and defence? Would she not, on one side, echo the hue and cry of hatred or prejudice, and, on the other, would she not repeat the pathetic or argumentative language of justification? Or, if soaring above the fields of contention, she rose up to the pure atmosphere of impartiality, would she not, like the eagle, look down with eager impatience at her quarry, and could she suppress the shrill cry of exultation at sight of the rich food prepared for her craving appetite? But, whatever might be the scenes acted and the persons in play, it would be on the broad theatre of the most unlimited freedom, in the cheering and illuminating light of the glorious sun of publicity, and under the scrutinizing eye of the whole civilized world.

Now comes the day of trial. Look at that vast room where stands the seat of judgment. All the doors are open, and within and without the palace of justice are to be seen the serried ranks of an eager crowd. From far and wide, perhaps from the most distant parts of the great American confederacy, men and women have come to share in the emotions of the famous trial which



occupies the attention of all, and the preliminaries of which have, for months past, with our modern means of conveying intelligence, been made as familiar to the dweller in the remotest village of Maine, as to the immediate neighbors of the accused. The sheriff has proclaimed the court to be in session; the judge, a man sprung from the loins of the people, and appointed by the people to expound and apply the laws which they themselves have framed, is on the bench; the accused have made their appearance at the bar, and are ready to meet the award of their country. Near them, for their protection and defence, stand some of the most learned and eloquent advocates that ever adorned their profession—some who, for their national reputation, have been invited from north and south, from east and west, to assist the talent and genius of the State—some, whose will rules senates, and directs the destinies of one of the most powerful nations of the earth—whose thunders of eloquence rise not only over the boundless plains, over the huge range of mountains, and along the innumerable rivers and lakes of the whole continent of America, but also ride the Atlantic wave, and reach with undiminished power and majesty the old European shore. By the side of those whom the law threatens with her uplifted sword, are such champions, interposing their shields, and ready to do battle for presumed innocence; and what is perhaps more cheering and more gladdening to the hearts of the accused, is the presence of their fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters and other relations, with numerous friends who throng the hall, and whose eyes speak the sympathies of their souls, and whose sorrow-stricken countenances are calculated to make such an impression on the theoretically immovable judges!

It is beautiful to see the fortifications and outposts

which the law has thrown around the life of the meanest citizen of our country, and which must be carried before it can be forfeited. First, a Grand Jury of his fellow-citizens is to determine whether there are sufficient grounds to put him on his trial; then it is his sacred privilege to be tried by his peers, by a petty jury of the vicinage, drawn by lot. He is furnished, in time to be duly examined and considered by him, with a list of the jury, and with a copy of the indictment found against him; he has the right of peremptory challenge, and of challenge for cause. These are some of the advantages secured to him, and of which a more minute enumeration would be out of place. In such a case as the one I have mentioned, it would probably take many a day to empanel a jury, on account of the difficulty of finding men, who, from the public or private reports, and from the very nature of our institutions, would not, in spite of themselves as it were, have formed an opinion on the guilt or innocence of the accused. Yet the jury is sworn at last! The Attorney-General has stated the grounds on which rests the prosecution, and the witnesses for the State are brought to the stand to substantiate them, and are put face to face with the accused. Then come the skirmishes and partial actions between the belligerents, on incidental matters of debate. The examination and cross-examination of witnesses are conducted with the most exquisite skill; the questions of evidence are minutely sifted and elaborately argued; every inch of ground is disputed with unwavering energy. When the witnesses for the defence are presented in their turn, the same keen encounter of wits, of science, of dialectics and of elocution is reacted. During all the while, faithful reports of the proceedings have been conveyed to the expecting millions, through the daily columns of the

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press. After many days of manœuvrings and counter manœuvrings, and a display of judicial tactics, infinite in variety, the evidence on both sides is closed, and the field of argument is open. Now comes the sublimest of all spectacles—the struggle of intellect against intellect, clad in the gorgeous armor of eloquence. It sheds no blood, but only the divine effulgence of mind, brought into sparkling collision with mind in the sacred discharge of duty. It is the battle of spirits of the air, of archangels fighting, as the bard saw them, with heavenly weapons. But the storm is over, and all the artillery of argument, of logic, of passion and of art has exhausted its missiles. Now is heard the clear and unimpassioned voice of the judge addressing the jury; he analyses the evidence, he sums up the arguments, he confutes sophistry, he expounds the law, and recommends its impartial application. The verdict of the jury closes the solemn scene.

In 1769, far different proceedings took place, the judges descended into the cell of the accused, and forced them to answer minutely all the questions they deemed proper to propound. The prisoners never saw the witnesses who were brought against them, and never knew who they were. These witnesses were examined in secret; and, with the same secrecy, the rest of the evidence was taken and weighed. It must be said, however, that, with regard to the facts on which the trial was to turn, they were abundantly and clearly proved. Indeed they had been of so public a nature that they could not be denied. Therefore, the accused themselves admitted most of them to be true, and confessed the respective parts they had acted in the last insurrection. But they rested their defence on the following grounds: The King of Spain, they said, had never taken possession

of Louisiana, and Ulloa, who alleged that he was commissioned to that effect, having never shown his powers and credentials, the colonists were not bound to receive him as the representative of his Catholic Majesty, but had the right to consider him as an intruder and an imposter, and to dismiss him from the Province as they did. Not only had the Spaniards never been in possession of Louisiana, but also the colonists had never taken the oath of allegiance to the King of Spain. Therefore, the Province not having become Spanish, it followed that it remained French. Aubry had never ceased to be its governor, and the colonists had not been released from their oath of fealty to the King of France. If the Province had become Spanish, how could Aubry still continue to govern it in the name of the French King? How could justice be administered by the same royal authority? On the other side, if it had remained French, what right had Ulloa, on his introducing himself to French subjects, to be believed, on his word, to be the representative of the Majesty of Spain? What right had he, without exhibiting any credentials, either from Louis XV., or from Charles III., to assume any powers in the colony? And when he did so, was it not the duty of the colonists for their protection, in vindication of their dignity, and in conformity with what was due to their legitimate sovereign of France, to eject the foreign trespasser? But, admitting that the taking possession of the colony by the Spaniards, or something tantamount to it, had been effected, or that said formal ceremony of taking possession was not absolutely necessary to establish in Louisiana the Spanish domination, still it could not be pretended that the French laws had ever been repealed, and therefore, they, the accused, were to be tried and judged according to the principles,

forms and usages of French jurisprudence, and by those French tribunals and authorities that were competent to take cognizance of their pretended offences, at the time they were alleged to have been committed. In consequence of this reasoning, they protested against the application of the Spanish laws to their case, when those laws had never been extended over the colony.

The Licenciado Don Felix del Rey, a practitioner before the Royal Courts of St. Domingo and Mexico, who had been appointed the prosecuting Attorney-General on behalf of the King against the authors of the insurrection of the 28th of October, 1768, presented to the Court, on the 20th of October, 1769, (all Spanish judicial proceedings being in writing,) a long document, in which he reviewed with great ability all the evidence that had been introduced, together with the laws applicable to the case; and he came to the conclusion that the accused had committed the crime of rebellion, wherefore he begged that they be condemned, each and severally, according to their respective degree of guilt, to undergo the penalty they had deserved. He commented with severity on the acts of the prisoners, and particularly on those of Lafrénère and Villeré. The latter being dead, was represented before the court by what was called "An attorney to his memory," *un avocat à sa mémoire*.

"Lafrénère," said Don Felix del Rey, "who was clothed with the character of the King's attorney-general, did not only advise the presentation to the Superior Council of the petition of the planters, merchants and other colonists of Louisiana, but also maintained with obstinacy that the Council was competent to act upon it, whilst he knew that its real object was, to resist the orders of their Most Christian and Catholic Majesties in

relation to the cession and possession of the colony and to many other points which it enumerated, when they could be decided only by the two kings, and were entirely beyond the contracted sphere of the Council. This conduct on the part of Lafrénière is that of an unfaithful officer, and makes him guilty of a crime of the gravest and most inexcusable nature, when, at the same time, it proves facts which he has denied. Thus, although being the King's attorney-general, and therefore the person who is supposed to be the organ of the throne, who ought to vindicate the royal authority and jurisdiction, who, by the very tenure of his office, is in duty bound, and more so than any body else, to labor efficaciously to carry into execution the decrees of the King, his master, and who ought to have been the most zealous of all in maintaining public tranquillity, yet he, Lafrénière, far from having been the real interpreter of the King's sentiments in the Council, far from having defended the authority and jurisdiction of his master, caused this same authority and jurisdiction to be usurped by the Council, by his attributing to said Council the power of taking cognizance of a matter far beyond its competency, and enabling that body to counteract the will of the King and the reasons of State which had induced his Most Christian Majesty to make the cession of Louisiana. On the contrary, his plain duty was, instead of supporting this usurpation of the rights of his Majesty, to maintain with firmness that the subject submitted to the Council did not come within its jurisdiction, and ought to be referred to the two kings.

“Such proceedings leave no room to doubt, that the accused did all he could to secure the success of the conspiracy; and, in order to be convinced of it, it is only necessary to cast a glance at the conclusions of his

address to the Council, which breathe hatred and indignation, and in which he is not satisfied with approving and affirming all the allegations of the petition of the colonists, but also permits himself to indulge in the most violent expressions, in order to influence the members of the Council, and to insure the success of the rebellion.

“Such was the deportment of Lafrénière, who thus abused his office of attorney-general, and showed himself the chief instigator of the conspiracy, whilst, in conformity with the obligations of his official character, far from being on the side of sedition, he ought to have been more careful than ever to discharge the duties of a faithful and obedient subject, as did Aubry on that occasion, who sought, with the greatest zeal and activity, to check the conspiracy, to tranquillize the inhabitants, and to keep them in due submission. Had Lafrénière followed such an example of loyalty, I have no doubt but that it would have been possible to recall the public mind to its usual calm, because he was the most considerable personage in the Council, the one who, on account of his office, exercised the most powerful influence over the people, and because he was the head of a numerous family. Had he joined Aubry, and had he, like this officer, protested, as he ought to have done, against the pretensions of the Council and its decree, the rebels would have been obliged to change their sentiments, and the members of the Council would have been constrained to do the like. What, above all, gives a darker hue to Lafrénière's guilt is, that at the very moment when he was driving his fellow-citizens into rebellion, he, in his capacity of attorney-general, was receiving his salary from the King of Spain's treasury.

“With regard to Villeré, who was a man of atrocious



dispositions, and remarkable for his pride and violence, he was, undoubtedly, one of the most conspicuous movers in the conspiracy, and signalized himself by deeds of the most striking character. He it was who stirred up to rebellion the Germans, of whom he was the commander; he it was who made them sign the petition requesting the expulsion of Ulloa and of all the other Spaniards. He it was who led them to New Orleans, to incorporate them with the other rebels, and to strengthen the insurrection, as every body must be aware, since, on that day, he was at their head and commanded them. These facts are proved, in every particular, by the depositions of witnesses which are on record. It is he who had the temerity to order the arrest of Maxent at the German Coast, and to take possession of the money which was destined to the Germans by Ulloa, for the payment of the grain which had been bought from them."

In relation to Petit, who was of a very diminutive size, Don Felix del Rey indulged in a vein of caustic humor, and said in the sneering language of contempt: "It has been proved that he participated in all that was done by the conspirators, and that, several days before the insurrection, he had declared, with great parade of his importance, that, *ere long the people would be rid of that devil, Ulloa, because he, Petit, had taken all the necessary measures to drive him off.* On the day of the insurrection, he appeared among the rebels, giving orders, and assuming to be one of the leaders and chief actors, so much so, that he had the insolence to cast off with his own hands, when Ulloa was expelled, the line which made fast to the shore the vessel in which that officer had embarked, because he felt impatient at the tardiness of the sailors in executing that operation. It was also



proved that, on his being informed of the arrival of his Excellency, General O'Reilly, at the Balize, he said: *that there ought to be a general turn out against the Spaniards, and that he would blow out the brains of the coward who should act differently.* These are the most atrocious offences which could be committed by a personage of so much insignificance. Notwithstanding his fury and the gigantic proportions of his pretensions, it was not possible for him to do more. Thus, considering only what he did, there is no reason to doubt, however, that he was one of the most obstinately violent actors among the rebels, and that he would have taken his share in offences still more serious, if his intellectual capacity and the contexture of his physical organization had furnished him with better means of conception and execution."

Don Felix del Rey thus reviewed all that had been proved against every one of the accused, and presented it to the court under its most striking colors. After having related all the events of the revolution, and analysed all the evidence on record, he proceeded to an examination of the laws which he thought applicable to the case. "Although," said he, "according to the strict letter of the law, the crime of high treason or rebellion embraces equally all those who have any share in its enormities, yet our sovereign, the most clement of kings, willing, in order to preserve the people against greater misfortunes, that punishment be inflicted only on a few, with the view of making it an example to others, has ordered by his royal schedule (H.) annexed to the record, that only the chief authors of the revolution and their principal accomplices be brought to trial, and punished in accordance with the degree of their guilt. There is no doubt but that the fact of conspiring, in a seditious

manner, against the State, renders the chief authors of this crime and their accomplices equally guilty, although it may not have had for its main object the royal Majesty itself, because, if it be not directed against the person of the prince, it is nevertheless, by its nature, and in its very essence, an act of high treason, and, consequently, it must be followed, on conviction, by the application of the pain of death and by the confiscation of property.

“I do not intend to descend into the abyss of that multitude of laws which I might summon to the support of the conclusions to which I have come. I shall content myself with establishing my position on the unshakable foundation of a few laws which bear directly on this case, and which are decisive against the accused. The first law which I shall quote is that which declares: *that any seditious or factious individual who shall cause an insurrection, and, under the pretext or semblance of defending his liberty or rights, shall take up arms, and excite others to do the same, shall be punished with death, as being guilty of high treason.* This law is clear in itself, and its exact application to this case is equally evident, considering that the accused induced the inhabitants of this province to take up arms, in order to support against Don Antonio de Ulloa the rights which they had set forth in their petition to the Council. It is said in another law that: *if any one produces disturbances or revolts in the kingdom, by causing cities to confederate, or people to assemble in arms, against the peace and dignity of the King or kingdom, he shall be punished with death, and be deprived of all that he may possess.* Another law comes in support of this one, and declares: *that those who shall cause such disturbances shall be traitors, and be punished with death and the loss of their property.* The same declaration is repeated in ano-

ther law of the *Recopilacion*. In a word, there is no lack of laws, defining with precision, and punishing with uniform severity, the offence to which our attention is called.

“In the present case, it is evident that the accused are seditious men, who conspired against the kingdom by endeavoring to wrest this colony from the Spanish domination. They also outraged the Spanish legislation, government and nation by the most insulting and opprobrious language, and by their demonstrations of hatred against his Majesty; and this last law which I have quoted, speaks also of this crime. Through their hatred of the king and kingdom, they took up arms under the pretext of defending their liberty and their rights, as they unanimously confess, and finally, they caused a prejudice to the kingdom, in destroying by their rebellion what the government and treasure of Spain had done, for several years past, in order to increase and improve the resources of this colony. Besides, their conspiracy was the cause of the expenses of fitting out the considerable expedition which became necessary to reduce them to submission and confirm the possession of his Catholic Majesty; so that, by applying the letter and spirit of the aforesaid laws, it is apparent that the accused are guilty, and deserve to lose their lives and their property. There is also another law, which subjects them to the same penalties by declaring: *that he who labors by deed or word to induce any people, or any provinces under the domination of the King, to rise against his Majesty, is a traitor*. The application of this law is so striking that it requires no comment, as it is proved that the accused caused the insurrection of the Germans and Acadians, who were living in quiet submission to his Majesty.

“Such are the laws according to which his Majesty ordered, in his royal Schedule, that those found guilty

in this affair be punished ; and these laws are consistent with the laws of nations, and particularly with the jurisprudence of every monarchy. The fact is, that there is not perhaps a nation, by which laws of the same nature have not been enacted, and are not put in force against those, who, seditiously and tumultuously, conspire against the State, since the only means of securing the preservation and tranquillity of a kingdom, is to make use of this kind of punishment against those who have the audacity to raise disturbances ; and it is impossible to question the legitimate application of these same laws to the crime committed in Louisiana against his Majesty of Spain ; when it is taken into consideration, that, on the breaking out of the insurrection of the 28th of October, the sovereignty of the King over Louisiana was established, as much by the possession taken by Don Antonio de Ulloa in the name of his Catholic Majesty, as by the right which the King had acquired over that colony, by virtue of the act of cession made by his Most Christian Majesty, which was published in the colony by the order of said Majesty.

“ It is idle, on the part of the accused, to say that Ulloa having never shown his credentials, and having never taken possession of Louisiana, they never were under the domination of Spain, and therefore cannot be guilty of the crime of rebellion against her. It is true that the vain pageantry of pulling down the French flag and of raising the standard of Spain was not exhibited in the public square at New Orleans. But did not Aubry, the representative of the King of France, receive Ulloa as the representative of the King of Spain ? Was he not acknowledged as such by the militia, by all the ecclesiastical, military and political corps of the colony ? Was not immediate and complete possession of the colony

tendered to Ulloa, and even pressed upon him with persevering earnestness? Was it not declined by him on account of an unforeseen circumstance—the refusal of the French troops to serve the King of Spain according to the promise and engagement of their sovereign, and because Ulloa found himself without sufficient forces to occupy all the posts? But did he not take possession of the Balize and of all the posts which are the keys of the province? It is true that the flag of France continued to wave alongside of that of Spain, but it was as the flag of an ally, whose assistance was necessary, and not because the province remained French. Aubry himself retained his authority, only at the request of Ulloa, and, therefore, was only the Spanish governor's delegate—and a mere agent and trustee for the crown of Spain—exercising powers *ad interim*, on the invitation, with the consent, and for the benefit of his Catholic Majesty.

“Ulloa never was in possession of Louisiana! Then, by what right was the Spanish flag floating from the Balize to the Illinois? How came all the expenses of the colony to be paid out of the Spanish treasury from March, 1766, to October, 1768, when the insurrection broke loose? How came Aubry to promulgate decrees issued by Ulloa? How came the Superior Council to register them? Was not the financial, commercial and military administration of the colony entirely under the direction of Ulloa? Who granted passports to the merchants? Was it not Ulloa? To whom did the commanders at the several posts apply to be continued in office? Was it not to Ulloa? Was it not with his consent and approbation that Noyan was at the head of the Acadians, and Villeré in command of the Germans? Whence did the chief conspirator, Lafrénière, derive his salary as Attorney-General? Was it not from the

Spanish treasury? Was he not in the pay of Spain when he turned upon her? Was it not treason? Who supplied the needy Acadians and Germans with their necessaries? Who drove away famine by furnishing the colonists with the provisions they required? Who paid the Clergy? Who repaired the churches? Who gave permission to the planters to export their crops, and to purchase the negroes whom their agricultural pursuits demanded? Was it not Ulloa? And the members of the Council themselves, did they not frequently submit to his approbation the judgments which they had rendered? How came his authority to be thus recognized in the sanctuary of justice? If Ulloa, in the opinion of the colonists, was not clothed with legitimate authority, how came they, during two years, to be daily invoking that authority, and plying him with constant applications for the grant of protection, privileges and favors, and for the redress of wrongs? And, after having thus acted, how can they be so graceless as to turn round, and contradict themselves by saying that he never had any authority? How is it that no vessel was allowed to sail from France to Louisiana, unless she had a passport granted by the Spanish authorities residing in that kingdom? Is it not clear, then, that Louisiana was a Spanish province in the eye of France? And if so for France, how could it be otherwise for the colonists? All these facts which I have enumerated, are proved beyond doubt or cavil. Do they not constitute possession? And could they have come to pass, had there not been previous and effectual possession to all intents and purposes? This ground of defence is, therefore, not tenable.

“As to the plea of the want of credentials, and of their not having been duly registered in the archives of the province, why did not the colonists raise that objec-

tion at the threshold, and refuse entrance to Ulloa into their territory, unless he exhibited the authority under which he pretended to act? But, after having so long dispensed with the production of these credentials, after having recognized him as the representative of the King of Spain, after having allowed him, during two years, to exercise all the powers that he did, can they be permitted to argue, from the circumstance of Ulloa's refusal to exhibit his credentials and to have them registered, that they were not bound to obey him as the authorized ministerial embodiment of Spain in the colony, and, therefore, that they did not and could not commit rebellion against our gracious sovereign? If this plea could ever have been good, they have precluded themselves from its use by their own acts, and it is now too late to present it to this court as a shield to rebellious traitors. These acts demonstrate that Ulloa had taken possession of the colony, and that the King of Spain was exercising therein all the powers of sovereignty when the insurrection of 1768 took place.

“But admitting, for the sake of argument, that Ulloa never took possession of Louisiana, is it to be inferred from this fact, that the province remained French? Certainly not. The treaty of cession made it a Spanish domain, from the moment it was signed and approved by all the parties. The proof of it is to be found in the French King's letter to D'Abbadie, in which this officer was informed, that it was his Majesty's intention to abdicate all his rights in and to the colony, from the very moment of the cession. Another proof is, that, in this very same document, his Most Christian Majesty designates the colonists of Louisiana, as the *new subjects of his Catholic Majesty*; and a third proof is, that France gave effectual information to her officers in the colony,



that, from the day of Ulloa's arrival at New Orleans, she would cease to be responsible for the expenses of the colonial administration. Clearly, then, the colony was no longer French. What was it, what could it be, if not Spanish? It is indeed ludicrous to maintain the contrary.

"But, say the accused: we had not taken the oath of allegiance to the King of Spain, and therefore we cannot be guilty of the crime of rebellion and high treason against him. This is the weakest kind of sophistry, and its refutation is easy. If the accused were not the subjects of his Catholic Majesty, they were, at least, residents in his domain; and it is a legal doctrine, well settled long ago, that those who are domiciliated in a foreign country, or who are mere travellers therein, although they are aliens and the subjects of another power, and have not taken the oath of allegiance to the sovereign of the country in which they happen to be, are bound, during their residence in it, either perpetual or temporary, to be true and obedient to that sovereign, in return for the protection and security which is extended over them; and that they may be as much guilty of rebellion and high treason against him as his natural born subjects. It has even been determined that foreign ambassadors were obliged to abstain from doing anything derogatory to the respect due to the sovereign in whose court they were sent to reside, and could be dismissed for any act done in violation of his rights, of his royal dignity and of the laws of his kingdom; and, if certain immunities on that ground have been granted to them, it is a matter of national courtesy and not of right, and should ambassadors proceed to any overt acts of violence against the sovereign, they would be liable to be punished according to the laws of the land.

"My preceding observations are sufficient to remove



all the doubts which may have been raised by the allegations of the accused: that Ulloa had not taken possession of the colony at the time when the crimes with which they are charged were alleged to have been committed; that they had not sworn fealty to the King of Spain; and that they had remained bound by their oath to the King of France, until they were absolved from it by the solemn ceremony which took place shortly after General O'Reilly's arrival.

“The true statement of the case may be summed up in a very few words. After the treaty of cession, Louisiana had, for more than two years, been a Spanish province in the eyes of the world, and the colonists themselves, during all that time, had quietly submitted to the Spanish rule, when some factious, perverse and ambitious individuals, not satisfied with Ulloa's administration, and regretting the loss of their former importance, seduced the rest of the people under false pretexts and by circulating the most infamous calumnies, and availed themselves of the irritation produced by a commercial decree unpalatable to the merchants of New Orleans, to bring on the insurrection of the 29th of October, 1768, under the delusive hope that they would thus disgust Spain with the new acquisition which had been tendered to her, and force France to take them back unto her bosom, in order to prevent their throwing themselves into the arms of England. The laws applicable to these criminal acts have been quoted and commented upon; the facts of the case are so authentically proved, the defence of the accused is so futile, and the laws, whose majesty is to be vindicated, speak a language so positive, so commanding and so clear, that what remains for me to do, is only to require, in the King's name, the judgment of the Court.”

Don Felix del Rey took no notice of that part of the defence which rested on the ground, that the French laws having never been repealed, and the Spanish laws having never been put in force, the accused were to be tried and judged according to the principles, forms and usages of French jurisprudence, and by those French authorities and tribunals that were competent to take cognizance of their pretended offences, at the time they were alleged to have been committed. It was thought, no doubt, that the King had finally predecided this point, by sending a tribunal, ready formed, from Spain, with all the necessary instructions and powers to try the authors of the insurrection of 1768. It was not for the members of this tribunal to set aside those instructions, on the ground of their illegality, and to question the authority with which, for a special purpose, they had been clothed by the sovereign, and to listen to arguments against their jurisdiction. This was a matter for the consideration of him from whom their powers originated. But, if Don Felix del Rey had not considered it useless to enter into the discussion of this plea, set up by the accused, he might have answered: that a distinction must be made between the civil and political laws, those which regulate the relations of citizens among themselves, and those which are established for the protection and security of the State. When a territory is acquired by a nation, the civil laws which existed there at the time, must undoubtedly continue in vigor, until they are abrogated, or modified by the new sovereign. But with regard to political and fundamental laws, as they are inherent in sovereignty, they follow, *ipso facto*, its extension wherever it is carried, and are in force at the very moment when that sovereignty is established. Thus, when in 1803, Governor Claiborne took possession

of Louisiana in the name of the United States of America, the civil laws of that province were not altered by this fact. But suppose the inhabitants of the country, as they did in 1768, had taken up arms, and violently resisted and expelled Governor Claiborne. This would have constituted the crime of rebellion or high treason against the United States. Would the trials which might have been the consequences of such deeds of violence, have been conducted according to the forms, rules, customs and laws of France, or Spain, or in conformity with the laws of the United States, as applicable to such cases? Clearly in accordance with the last, which, almost as a component part of the flag of the United States, would have followed it into the province, and have been in force by the mere fact of possession, without requiring any special promulgation: and all outrages, such as acts of rebellion or high treason, against the collective sovereignty of the United States, would have been repressed, tried and punished according to the laws of these States, and by the tribunals of their own creation, and not according to the laws and by the tribunals established for the protection of the sovereignties of Spain and France. This distinction between civil and political laws is essentially required by their very nature. Thus it seems that the plea set up by the accused in 1769, and on which I do not think it out of place to venture these few remarks, although Don Felix del Rey deemed it unworthy of notice, did not, in reality, rest on any solid foundation.

Be it as it may, it is certain that, if the colonists, instead of having accepted for two years the Spanish domination, had resisted it in the beginning, on the ground that they were no herd of cattle, and could not be transferred without their consent, they would have presented

a more plausible justification, by relying on the following passage of Vattel's laws of nations.\*

"If the nation has conferred the full sovereignty to its conductor, if it has intrusted to him the care, and, without reserve, given him the right, of treating and contracting with other States, it is considered as having invested him with all the powers necessary to make a valid contract. The prince is then the organ of the nation ; what he does is considered as the act of the nation itself; and though he is not the owner of the public property, his alienations of it are valid, as being duly authorized.

"The question becomes more distinct, when it relates, not to the alienation of some parts of the public property, but to the dismemberment of the nation or State itself—the cession of a town or a province that constitutes a part of it. This question, however, admits of a sound decision on the same principles. A nation ought to preserve itself—it ought to preserve all its members—it cannot abandon them ; and it is under an engagement to support them in their rank as members of the nation. It has not, then, a right to traffic with their rank and liberty, on account of any advantages it may expect to deprive from such a negotiation. They have joined the society for the purpose of being members of it—they submit to the authority of the State, for the purpose of promoting in concert their common welfare and safety, and not of being at its disposal, like a farm or herd of cattle. But the nation may lawfully abandon them in a case of extreme necessity ; and she has the right to cut them off from the body, if the public safety requires it. When, therefore, in such a case, the State

\* Vattel's Laws of Nations, Chap. xxi. Of the alienation of the public property, or the domain, and that of a part of a State.

gives up a town or a province to a neighbor, or to a powerful enemy, the cession ought to remain valid as to the State, since she has a right to make it; nor can she any longer lay claim to the town or province thus alienated, since she has relinquished every right she could have over them.

“But the province or town thus abandoned and dismembered from the State, is not obliged to receive the new master whom the State attempts to set over it. Being separated from the society of which it was a member, it resumes all its original rights; and if it be capable of defending its liberty against the prince who would subject it to his authority, it may lawfully resist him. Francis I. having engaged, by the treaty of Madrid, to cede the Duchy of Burgundy to the emperor Charles V., the states of that province declared, *‘That, having never been subject but to the crown of France, they would die subject to it; and that, if the King abandoned them, they would take up arms and endeavor to set themselves at liberty, rather than pass into a new state of subjection.’* It is true, subjects are seldom able to make resistance on such occasions; and, in general, their wisest plan will be to submit to their new master, and endeavor to obtain the best terms they can.”

This, indeed, would have been the wisest course which the colonists, weak as they were, could have pursued, and it is much to be regretted that they did not do so. Blood would not have been uselessly shed in an enterprise in which success was materially impossible.

On the 24th of October, the Court found the prisoners guilty, and O'Reilly, as its president, pronounced and signed the judgment, which read thus:

“In the criminal trial instituted by the order of the King, our Sovereign, to discover and punish the chiefs

and authors of the conspiracy which broke out in this colony, on the 29th of October of the last year, (1768,) against its Governor Don Antonio de Ulloa, all the ground of the accusation having been substantially investigated, according to the due forms of law, between the parties,—on one side, the Licentiate Don Felix del Rey, a practising advocate before the royal courts of St. Domingo and Mexico, here acting in his capacity of Attorney-General appointed by me for the King, according to the royal authority vested in me,—and on the other, Nicholas Chauvin de Lafrénière, ex-Attorney-General for the King of France and the senior member of the Superior Council, Jean Baptiste Noyan, his son-in-law, Pierre Caresse, Pierre Marquis, Joseph Milhet, an attorney to the memory of Joseph Villeré, on account of this culprit's demise in prison, Joseph Petit, Balthasar Masan, Julien Jerome Doucat, Pierre Hardy de Boisblanc, Jean Milhet and Pierre Poupet, accused of having participated in the aforesaid crime and in the subsequent seditions which broke out against the Spanish government and nation; having perused the information, depositions and other documents inserted in the procès verbal of this case; having compared the confessions of the accused with the papers found in the possession of some of them, and by them acknowledged as theirs; the accused being heard in their defence, and the charges brought against them being accompanied by their respective proofs; having heard the conclusions of the Attorney-General in his bill of indictment; all being examined and considered, either in point of fact or of law, in a case replete with circumstances so grave and so extraordinary; and taking into consideration all that results from said trial, to which I refer, I have to declare and I declare, that the aforesaid Attorney-General has completely proved

what he had to prove, and that the accused have not proved and established the allegations set up in their defence; that they have made out no exception which frees them from the crime imputed to them, and still less saves them from the penalties which, according to our laws, they have incurred for their respective shares in the excesses which have been enumerated by the Attorney-General Don Felix del Rey; so that, from the present, I have to condemn and I do condemn the aforesaid Nicholas Chauvin de Lafrénière, Jean Baptiste Noyan, Pierre Caresse, Pierre Marquis and Joseph Milhet, the chiefs and principal movers of the aforesaid conspiracy, to the ordinary pain of the gallows, which they have deserved by the infamy of their conduct, and ipso jure, by their participation in so horrible a crime, and to be led to the place of execution, mounted on asses, and each one with a rope round his neck, to be then and there hung until death ensue, and to remain suspended to the gallows until further orders; it being hereby given to be understood that any one having the temerity of carrying away their bodies without leave, or of contravening, in whole or in part, the execution of this very same sentence, shall suffer death. And, as it results also from said trial, and from the declarations of the aforesaid Attorney-General, that the late Joseph Villeré stands convicted, likewise, of having been one of the most obstinate promoters of the aforesaid conspiracy, I condemn, in the same manner, his memory to be held and reputed for ever infamous; and, doing equal justice to the other accused, after having taken into consideration the enormity of their crime, as proved by the trial, I condemn the aforesaid Petit to perpetual imprisonment in such a castle or fortress as it may please his Majesty to designate; the aforesaid Balthasar Masan and Julien



Jerome Doucet, to ten years' imprisonment ; and Pierre Hardy de Boisblanc, Jean Milhet and Pierre Poupet to six years' imprisonment ; with the understanding that none of them shall ever be permitted to live in any one of the dominions of his Catholic Majesty, reserving to myself the care to have every one of these sentences provisionally executed, and to cause to be gathered up together and burnt by the hand of the common hangman all the printed copies of the document entitled 'Memorial of the planters, merchants and other inhabitants of Louisiana on the event of the 29th of October, 1768,' and that all other publications relative to said conspiracy be dealt with in the same manner ; and I have further to decree, and I do decree, in conformity with the same laws, that the property of every one of the accused be confiscated to the profit of the King's treasury ; and judging definitively, I pronounce this judgment, with the advice of Doctor Don Manuel Jose de Urrutia, Auditor of war and of the navy for the harbor and city of Havana, and the special assessor named by me for this cause under the royal authority ; and his fees, as well as those of the officers employed in this trial, shall be paid out of the confiscated property in the manner prescribed by law.

Signed, ALEXANDRO O'REILLY.  
Countersigned, MANUEL JOSE DE URRUTIA."

When this sentence was known, the effects which it produced can easily be conceived. The most strenuous efforts were made to obtain from O'Reilly that its execution be suspended until an appeal be made to the royal clemency of Charles III. With the same gentleness of manner which characterized all his acts, but with the marked expression of unshakable determination, he re-



plied : "That the Court had given its decision, and that it was final ; that he had merely presided over the Court, but that, according to his plighted faith and well-known assurances, he had acted no other part in the trial than that of taking care that the accused be as favorably treated as possible ; that he had strictly and honorably kept his word ; that he could do no more ; that he had instructions which he could not disregard, and which he had communicated to Aubry, to the accused and to their friends ; that those instructions ordered him to proceed to an immediate execution of the sentence of the Court, whatever it might be, and that he would do so, in conformity with his duty, however painful it might be to his feelings." Some of those French ladies whose husbands, fathers or brothers had remained faithful to the Spanish cause, thought that, owing to this circumstance, they might perhaps exercise some influence over General O'Reilly ; and, finding their way to him, they made a passionate appeal in favor of the condemned—such an appeal as the female heart alone can inspire. There were more than one Lady Margaret and one Miss Edith Bellenden, who, with frames trembling with anxiety, poured out their souls in supplications to O'Reilly. Like Graham of Claverhouse, whose character bore considerable affinity to his own, he resisted their intercessions with the most exquisite politeness, but with an inexorable temper, although he was, at that time, hardly more than thirty-four years old, therefore in the prime of life, and still at that age when the soul of man is not yet to be supposed steeled against the tears of woman and the soft emotions of pity and generosity. It is said that some of the Spanish officers, and particularly Loyola, Gayarre and Navarro, acting under the influence of their own feelings, and the promptings of those friends,

whom, during a residence of nearly three years in the colony, they had made to themselves among the French population, advised O'Reilly to assume the responsibility of suspending the execution of the Court's judgment, until further orders be received from Spain; but all their applications remained fruitless, and it was soon ascertained that the doom of the accused was sealed. The sentence had been rendered on the 24th of October, and it became known that those who were condemned to death, would be executed on the next day.

If tradition is to be believed, O'Reilly, although inflexible in appearance, was secretly moved to compassion in favor of Noyan, the son-in-law of Lafrénière. This gentleman had lately been married, and his youth, his inexperience and other circumstances, pleaded as strongly in his favor as the numerous friends who left no means untried to save him. Certain words which dropped from the General's mouth gave it to be understood that the escape of this prisoner would be connived at. But Noyan, on being informed of it, heroically refused to avail himself of this favorable circumstance, and said that he would live or die with his associates.

Dumont, who wrote a work on Louisiana in 1753, relates that, when the Province was under the administration of the great India Company, it was found out that, in a civilized government, it was necessary that the office of hangman be regularly and permanently filled; and that this office was tendered, with all its privileges and perquisites, to a slave of the company, named Jeannot. The grant of his freedom was to be the reward of his acceptance. But Jeannot was a high-spirited black, and peremptorily refused the favor. Yet, when he saw that the French were determined to force him to act in that capacity, he appeared to consent at last, and only

begged that he might be permitted to go to his cot. There, seizing a hatchet, he struck off his right arm; then returning to the place where he was waited for to act as hangman, he showed to the assembled multitude the impossibility in which he was, to perform the functions assigned to him. The French were struck with admiration, and Jeannot was appointed overseer of all the negroes belonging to the company. Since that time a negro (for all the men of that race were not as nobly-minded as Jeannot) had always acted as hangman in the colony.

But it was thought that it would be too great an outrage against the feelings of the community, and, at the same time, a very impolitic act, considering the peculiar elements of the population of Louisiana, to have some of its most distinguished citizens hung by a negro. It was therefore necessary to find out a white man, who might be willing to discharge these functions. None, however, although a high reward was offered, presented himself to claim it. Consequently, the Attorney-General Don Felix del Rey laid before O'Reilly, on the morning of the 25th, a petition in which he informed him of this fact, and begged him, on account of the impossibility of executing the original sentence of the Court, to have the prisoners shot, but without removing the infamy which would have resulted from their suffering death on the gallows. O'Reilly assented to this request, and Francisco Xavier Rodriguez, the clerk of the Court, drew a *procès verbal* of the execution, which took place in his presence, at three o'clock in the afternoon. It appears by this *procès verbal* that Nicolas Chauvin de Lafrénière, Pierre Marquis, Joseph Milhet, Jean Baptiste Noyan and Pierre Caresse, being taken out of prison, and with their arms well pinioned, were conducted, under a heavy es-

cort of grenadiers, to the place of execution, which was occupied by a large body of Spanish troops forming a square. The prisoners being introduced into the middle of this square, Rodriguez, the clerk of the Court, read to them their sentence in Spanish, and it was then repeated to them in French by Henry Garderat, assisted by two other interpreters, Jean Baptiste Garic, and the Lieutenant of artillery, Juan Kely, who had all been specially appointed by O'Reilly to act as interpreters on the trial. Then a copy of the sentence was delivered into the hands of the public crier, who went round, and read it to all the troops and to the people in a loud and intelligible voice. After these preliminaries were over, the last act of the drama was performed, and the well directed fire of a platoon of grenadiers ended the lives of those unfortunate men. It is said that they met their fate with unshaken fortitude.

On the next day, the 26th of October, the same Rodriguez caused to be burnt, on the public square, all the copies of the "Memorial of the planters, merchants and other inhabitants of Louisiana," which had been discovered and gathered up together.

Masan and his companions were immediately transported to Havana, and imprisoned in fort Moro. It may be as well to state now that the son of Masan went to Madrid, threw himself at the feet of the King, and begged that his father be pardoned, or that he be permitted to take that father's place. The prayer of this generous young man, which was warmly supported by the French ambassador, touched the King, who granted a full pardon, not only to Masan, but also to Doucet, Boisblanc, Milhet, Poupet and Petit. None of them returned to Louisiana, and it is believed that they went to reside at the Cape Franais in St. Domingo.

Aubry left Louisiana for Bordeaux in the brigantine called the *Père de Famille*. This vessel had entered the river Garonne, when she met a heavy storm and went down near the Tower of Cordouan, with all on board save the captain, a physician, a sergeant and two sailors, who succeeded in reaching the land in safety. The King, in order to show how much he appreciated the services of Aubry, granted a pension to the brother and to the sister of that officer. Aubry, before his departure from Louisiana, had been offered a high grade in the Spanish army, as a token of satisfaction at the liberal course which he had pursued towards that nation in the colony, but he refused, on the ground that he intended to devote the remnant of his days to the service of his native country. Some there were who thought that if those whom they loved so dearly had been unjustly treated, it was mostly in consequence of the imprudent denunciations of that officer and of his servility to O'Reilly and the Spaniards. By them his melancholy end was looked upon as an act of the retributive justice of Heaven.

It is related that, among the confiscated slaves of Lafrénière, there was one named Artus, who had the reputation of being an admirable cook. O'Reilly sent for Artus, and said to him: "You are now the King of Spain's property. Until you are sold, you will be my cook." "You had better change your mind," answered the negro. "I would poison him who ordered my master to be killed." It is also reported that one of Caresse's slaves, whose name was Cupidon, and who was an excellent house servant, refused peremptorily to perform these functions for O'Reilly, because, as he boldly said, "he would not serve his master's assassin." O'Reilly seemed to appreciate the noble sentiment which actuated these

faithful slaves and dismissed them without resenting the determination which they had both so fearlessly expressed. If these anecdotes are true, they show that negroes are capable of heroic attachment for those that hold them in bondage, and that O'Reilly was not a man of an unamiable disposition.

The bloody execution which took place in Louisiana caused a good deal of excitement in France, and it seems that the French government instructed its agents in Spain, to ascertain what effect it had produced on the Spaniards themselves. I have under my eye a letter written to one of the French ministers by a Mr. Depuyabre, a French agent at Cadix, in answer to the inquiries which had been addressed to him, and in which he says: "All the relations of that event which were sent from Louisiana to Havana, agree in blaming the rigor with which General O'Reilly punished the most distinguished citizens of Louisiana. The Spaniards here, and many foreigners, whatever nation they belong to, have expressed their detestation of such an act. You know better than any body else what were the orders of which O'Reilly was the bearer, and you can thereby judge whether that officer kept himself, or not, within the sphere of his powers."

It must be recollected that the Marquis of Grimaldi, on the departure of O'Reilly from Spain for Louisiana, had sent to the Count of Fuentes, the Spanish ambassador at the Court of Versailles, a despatch which was intended to be laid before the French ministry, and in which he had said: "It seemed proper to invest Don Alexandro O'Reilly with these extensive powers, on account of the distance at which we are from that country. But, as the King, whose character is well known, is always inclined to be mild and clement, he has ordered

O'Reilly to be informed that his will was, that a lenient course be pursued in the colony, and that expulsion from it be the only punishment inflicted on those who have deserved a more severe one."

It would seem from this document, that O'Reilly should have contented himself with having expelled from the colony those who had deserved a severer punishment—for instance the pain of death. But were the instructions shown to the Court of France and those really given to O'Reilly of the same nature? That is the question. If O'Reilly received the instructions which are mentioned in the despatch of the Marquis of Grimaldi, would he have dared to disobey them, and would he, when such strong appeals were made to him to save the lives of Lafrénière and his companions, have had the unblushing effrontery, on refusing that boon, to plead the orders of the King, and thus falsely, to throw upon his sovereign the odium of a measure, which was contrary to the expressed will of that very sovereign? Had he assumed this responsibility, on account of some unforeseen circumstances or reasons, would he not have accounted for those circumstances or reasons in his despatches to his government? But, far from using the language of apology or exculpation for having acted with severity, in violation of his positive instructions, he, on the contrary, applauds himself for the extreme lenity of the course he pursued. This is demonstrated by the despatch which he sent to the Marquis of Grimaldi, to give an account of the closing of the trial and of the execution of the sentence of the Court:

"The trial which began here," said he, "against the twelve chiefs, movers and accomplices of the insurrection which took place in this province, is at an end. Six of them, having deserved death, were sentenced to be hung;



but one of these culprits having died in prison, five only were executed, and, as there is no executioner here, they were shot on the 25th of this month (October), at three o'clock of the afternoon. The six others were sentenced to be imprisoned in one of the King's castles, that is, one for life, two for ten years and three for six years, and the property of the twelve was confiscated.

"The six who were sentenced to be imprisoned will be sent to day to one of the forts at Havana. I transmit to the Captain-General of that place a copy of the judgment, in order that he may proceed to carry it into execution.

"The property of these prisoners had been sequestered from the beginning of their trial. I have just given the necessary orders for the liquidation of said property in accordance with the laws, in order that what belongs to the widows and other creditors may be given to them, and the balance be delivered up into the King's treasury.

"This judgment wipes off entirely the insult offered to the dignity and authority of the King in this province, and checks the effects of the bad example which had been given to the subjects of his Majesty. Every body acknowledges the necessity, the justice, and the clemency of this judgment, which sets up an example ever to be remembered. What renders it still more effectual, is the diligence with which this affair was conducted, and the incontestible nature of the evidence on which this judgment was founded.

"I will treat, for the future, with marked gentleness, all those who signed the representations addressed to the Council, and it will be a great consolation to the public to know that I shall leave in this colony no painful recollection of that audacious outrage. I will conciliate and



tranquillize the public mind by all the means in my power, and nothing will be more conducive to this end than to let the people know, that all past occurrences shall be forgotten, and that every one shall receive from the government the protection and favor which he may deserve."

This candid exposition which O'Reilly made of his sentiments proves, that he thought himself entitled to much credit for the lenity of his acts. *Everybody*, says he with exultation, *acknowledges the necessity, the justice and the clemency of this judgment, which sets an example ever to be remembered.* And it must not be forgotten that Governor Aubry, writing to his own government, takes the same view of the course of action adopted by O'Reilly. *I have the honor*, said he to the French minister, *of sending a list of the small number of those whom the general was indispensably obliged to have arrested. This proves his generosity and the kindness of his heart, considering that there are many others, whose criminal conduct would have justified their being treated in the same manner.*

To judge fairly of the feelings and ideas of these men, we must transport ourselves back to the days in which they lived, we must adopt the turn of mind which education, habits and associations had given them, and we must become impregnated with the political, social and moral atmosphere in which they had been born. In this age, the treatment which was inflicted on Lafrénière and his companions may be looked upon as tinged with cruelty, if appreciated with our modern feelings of humanity, and with those notions of right and wrong, which now prevail throughout the civilized world. In 1851, Lafrénière and his accomplices would not, probably, have been condemned to an ignominious death, for

doing what they did in 1768. They had resisted the exercise of powers which they thought oppressive to them, and which were wielded by an officer whom they believed to be clothed with dubious authority; they had resorted to every means, even violence, not to be severed from that kingdom to which the colony was indebted for its birth. But they had shed no blood; and when experience demonstrated to them that their schemes of being re-annexed to France, or to set up for themselves under an independent government, were visionary; when O'Reilly arrived with such forces as it would have been madness to cope with, they tendered, at once, their full and entire submission to the government of Spain. It must be recollected, however, that a century ago, the slightest attempt against royal authority was considered as one of the most heinous crimes that could be committed, and was punished with a severity which now would not be tolerated by public opinion; and that offences which then were deemed to deserve death, would not now be the cause even of putting a man on his trial. It is not astonishing therefore that both Aubry and O'Reilly should have honestly thought that, to pick out of the rebellious colonists twelve leaders only, six of whom should be shot, and six imprisoned for a greater or lesser period of time, and to grant a full and unconditional pardon to the rest, was an extremely merciful act. Besides, there is no doubt but that O'Reilly was moved by considerations of policy. As Spain did not intend to keep up a large military force in Louisiana, it was necessary to produce such an impression on its inhabitants as to prevent the repetition of what had occurred; and above all, it was expedient to set a salutary example before the other colonies, to deter them from similar enterprises, and to show, in the

language used by the Duke of Alba, in the written opinion on the affairs of Louisiana which he presented to the king as a member of his cabinet : *that the king knew how, and was able, to repress any attempt whatever, derogatory to the respect due to the royal authority.*

Some there are who accuse O'Reilly of treachery and duplicity, on account of the interpretation which they put on the marked civilities which he proffered to the leaders of the insurrection, when they were introduced to him, and on the exceedingly courteous language which he addressed to them. They believe that these men had a right to infer from O'Reilly's deportment, that their past deeds were forgotten, and that they would not be brought to trial; it is said that O'Reilly lulled them into security, in order to keep them within his reach, and to prevent them from seeking their safety in flight, until he should be ready to arrest, at the same time, all the chiefs of the late revolution whom he had singled out. These suppositions derive some strength, it is true, from the opinion expressed by Bouigny, himself a Spanish officer, who was present at the interview between the delegates of the colonists and O'Reilly at the Balize, and who said : *that the general sent them back with good hopes that their past faults should be forgotten.* It is not astonishing therefore that Lafrénière, Marquis and Milhet, should have shared with Bouigny such flattering impressions. The secret intentions of deceit attributed to O'Reilly may have been true, but still, in justice to him, it must be remarked that the extreme courtesy of his language and of his deportment is not sufficient, of itself, to warrant the conclusion that it was dictated by duplicity. It was, on the like occasions, the natural tone of the high bred gentlemen of the time, although it may sound to us as smacking of dissimula-

tion, or affectation. Numerous other instances might be cited of the wrong interpretations to be given to the actions and language of the men of past ages, if, as I have already observed, we judge of them according to the criterion of our present usages and customs. I will, in illustration of my assertion, select one instance only, which is striking.

The Cardinal Richelieu had been, for many years, presiding as prime minister over the destinies of France, and had defeated more than one conspiracy against his life and power, formed by the highest nobility, by the mother and the brother of the king, who hated the state of insignificance to which that master mind had reduced them, and often by the king himself, who used to become their secret accomplice, whenever in one of his fits of disgust at the thralldom in which he was kept by his proud and domineering minister. Now that the cardinal was broken down by disease and fast approaching his grave, his enemies again lost patience, and gathered under the leadership of young Cinq-Mars, who had become the favorite of the weak king. Hardly had the conspiracy been set on foot, when the wily cardinal had become acquainted with all its workings. Determined to strike a last blow, which would be so crushing that it would, for the future, put an end to such enterprises, he appeared to be wrapped up in fancied security, waiting patiently, for two years, with the self-confidence of genius, until the fruit of his revenge be ripe, before he plucked it. Only on the eve of the breaking out of the conspiracy was it, that, although in a dying condition, he came forth in his strength of mind, if not of body, and with one single thrust of his crippled and gouty foot, demolished instantaneously the structure which had been so laboriously erected against him. He terrified

the king out of his little wits, brought down almost to his knees the king's vile brother, Gaston D'Orleans, to ask pardon for his share in the conspiracy, and annihilated all those of his enemies whom he thought worthy of his notice. Cinq-Mars and De Thou were those he had particularly singled out for his vengeance. De Thou, being in prison at Tarascon, where the infirm cardinal caused himself to be transported, was ordered to the presence of his mortal enemy, to be by him interrogated. The manner in which they met is remarkable. Let it be remembered that both were aware of the relative positions in which they stood to each other. The Cardinal had made up his mind to have De Thou's head cut off; De Thou knew it, and the Cardinal was conscious that his intentions were no secret for the prisoner. Therefore there could be no attempt, and there could be no wish to deceive each other. Yet, see how they behave when face to face. The Cardinal, who was in bed and propped up by cushions, when De Thou was ushered into the room by the guards, greeted him with a gentle salute, and, inviting him to be seated by the bed on which he, the Cardinal, was reposing, said, with the utmost suavity of manner; "Sir, I beg you to excuse me for having given you the trouble of coming here." "My Lord," answered De Thou, "I consider the invitation as a favor and an honor." The rest of the interview was in the same style. Was it deceit, irony, affectation or dissimulation? Neither the one nor the other. It was the customary tone of exquisite politeness familiar to two men, who were equally mindful of their respective rank and character, and whose minds were so framed, that they never lost sight, for one moment, of the old adage: *that a gentleman is the peer of another*. Times have changed, and the highest in the land, were he

brought before a Justice of the Peace, not for a matter of life and death, but on a charge of petty trespass, would probably be interrogated in a more commanding tone. But is it to be inferred that, on the occasion I have related, Cardinal Armand Du Plessis, Duke of Richelieu, and the real king of France, acted with hypocrisy towards De Thou?

The inventories made of the property of the twelve gentlemen whom the decree of the Spanish tribunal had convicted of rebellion, afford interesting proofs of the Spartan simplicity which existed in the colony. Thus the furniture of the bedroom of Madam Villeré, who was the wife of one of the most distinguished citizens of Louisiana, and the grand-daughter of De Lachaise, who came to the colony, in 1723, as ordaining commissary, was described as consisting of a cypress bedstead, three feet wide by six in length, with a mattress of corn shucks and one of feathers on the top, a bolster of corn shucks, and a coarse cotton counterpane or quilt, manufactured probably by the lady herself, or by her servants; six chairs of cypress wood, with straw bottoms; some candlesticks with candles made of the common green wax of the country, etc., etc. The rest of the house was not more splendidly furnished, and the house itself, as described in the inventory, must have looked very much like one of those modest and unpainted little wood structures which are, to this day, to be seen in many parts of the banks of the river Mississippi, and in the Attakapas and Opelousas parishes. They are the tenements of the small planters who own only a few slaves, and they retain the appellation of *Maisons d'Acadiens, or Acadian houses*. Villeré's plantation, situated at the German Coast, was not large, and the whole of his slaves, of both sexes and of all ages, did not exceed thirty-two. His

friends and brother conspirators, who were among the first gentlemen in the land, did not live with more ostentation. All the sequestered property being sold, it was found that, after having distributed among the widows and other creditors what they were entitled to, and after paying the costs of the trial and inventories, the royal treasury had nothing or very little to receive. These costs, however, were moderate, for they amounted only to 782 livres, or about \$157, for each of the persons convicted.

There were but humble dwellings in Louisiana in 1769, and he who had drawn his inferences from their outward appearance would have thought that they were occupied by mere peasants; but had he passed their thresholds, he would have been amazed at being welcomed with such manners as were habitual in the most polished court of Europe, and entertained by men and women wearing with the utmost ease and grace the elegant and rich costume of the reign of Louis XV. There, the powdered head, the silk and gold flowered coat, the lace and frills, the red-heeled shoe, the steel-handled sword, the silver knee buckles, the high and courteous bearing of the gentleman, the hoop petticoat, the brocaded gown, the rich head-dress, the stately bow, the slightly rouged cheeks, the artificially graceful deportment, and the aristocratic features of the lady, formed a strange contrast with the roughness of surrounding objects. It struck one with as much astonishment as if diamonds had been found capriciously set by some unknown hand in one of the wild trees of the forest, or it reminded the imagination of those fairy tales in which a princess is found asleep in a solitude, where none but beasts of prey were expected to roam.

“One of the first acts of O’Reilly’s administration,” says Judge Martin in his history of Louisiana, “was an



order for a census of the inhabitants of New Orleans. It was executed with great accuracy. It appeared that the aggregate population amounted to three thousand one hundred and ninety souls. The number of free persons was nineteen hundred and two; thirty-one of whom were black, and sixty-eight of mixed blood. There were twelve hundred and twenty-five slaves, and sixty domiciliated Indians. The number of houses was four hundred and sixty-eight. The greatest part of them were in the third and fourth streets from the river, and principally in the latter.

“No census was taken in the rest of the province, but, from a reference to the preceding and succeeding years, the following statement is believed to be correct:

“New Orleans, as before,	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,190
From the Balize to the town,	-	-	-	-	-	-	570
Bayou St. John and Gentilly,	-	-	-	-	-	-	807
Tchoupitoulas,	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,192
St. Charles,	-	-	-	-	-	-	339
St. John the Baptist,	-	-	-	-	-	-	544
Lafourche,	-	-	-	-	-	-	267
Iberville,	-	-	-	-	-	-	876
Pointe Coupée,	-	-	-	-	-	-	783
Attakapas,	-	-	-	-	-	-	409
Avoyelles,	-	-	-	-	-	-	814
Natchitoches,	-	-	-	-	-	-	811
Rapides,	-	-	-	-	-	-	47
Ouachita,	-	-	-	-	-	-	110
Arkansas,	-	-	-	-	-	-	88
St. Louis (Illinois),	-	-	-	-	-	-	891
							<hr/> 18,588

About half of this population was white.

“The exports of the province, during the last year of its subjection to France,” says the same author, “were as follows:

In Indigo,	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$100,000
Deer skins,	-	-	-	-	-	-	80,000
Lumber,	-	-	-	-	-	-	50,000



Naval Stores, . . . . .	\$12,000
Rice, peas and beans, - . . . .	4,000
Tallow, . . . . .	4,000
	<hr/>
	\$250,000
An interlope trade with the Spanish colonies took away goods worth . . . . .	60,000
The colonial treasury gave bills on government in France for . . . . .	380,000
	<hr/>
So that the province afforded means of remittance for	\$670,000

“Few merchant vessels came from France; but the Island of Hispaniola carried on a brisk trade with New Orleans, and some vessels came from Martinique. King’s vessels brought whatever was necessary for the troops, and goods for the Indian trade.

“The indigo of Louisiana was greatly inferior to that of Hispaniola; the planters being quite unskillful and inattentive in the manufacture of it. That of sugar had been abandoned, but some planters near New Orleans raised a few canes for the market.”

Such was the embryo colony which France had created, and which she had possessed seventy years. Although ceded to Spain in 1762, it was not under the entire control of that power before the 18th of August, 1769, when O’Reilly took formal possession of the country. It had been much curtailed from its original territorial proportions, but still, from the Balize to its contested limits with the Mexican provinces, and to that almost unknown region which extended far beyond St. Louis, towards the sources of the Mississippi, it contained space enough for an immense population; and a better administration than that of France, conducted on far different principles, might have obtained results more favorable than those which had crowned her efforts. It is not a high estimate to suppose that Louisiana, from 1699, the date of its colonization, to 1769, when it was

finally delivered over to Spain, must have cost, directly and indirectly, from fifteen to twenty millions of dollars disbursed by Crozat, the India Company, and France, who never got any returns for this very large expenditure. Of all the great powers of Europe, France, with her spirit of enterprise, her brave and intelligent population, and her vast resources, had been the least successful in her attempts at establishing colonies; and, after an infinite waste of courage and perseverance, of hardy labor, of blood and of treasure, she had lost at last almost every inch of her once boundless possessions on the continent of America. Spain and England had divided the shreds of that gorgeous mantle which adorned her shoulders, but which she had allowed to drop as a heavy incumbrance.

The preceding pages have been written to very little purpose, if they have not made apparent to the reader the causes which checked the prosperity of Louisiana, and rendered her a worthless possession in the hands of France. Those causes lie on the surface of the history itself which I have sketched, and it requires no depth of research, nor any recondite analysis to discover them and appreciate their nature. To one of them, however, I must, in concluding this work, make a passing allusion, because it is still in existence, and exercises a fatal influence over the destinies of Louisiana to this present day. It is, that those who came to her, never considered that they had found a *home* in her bosom. With the exception perhaps of the Acadians, and of the Germans whom Law had sent to the colony in 1722, those whom she received in her lap were not grateful for the hospitality, and deemed themselves to be miserable exiles. All the military officers and other persons employed by the government had but one object in view, that of availing

themselves, to obtain promotion, of their services in that distant country, and of the reputation of perils which they were really exposed to, or were supposed to have encountered; and they also bethought themselves of nothing else than making money by fair or foul means, according to their different dispositions, in order to return with increased honors, or with ampler means of enjoyment, to their cherished native country, to the beautiful France, which they could not forget. With regard to that part of the population which was not composed of officials, a good many had been transported to Louisiana by force, and detested a country which they looked upon as a prison. Others, whose coming had been the result of their own volition, had been deceived by wild hopes, by unrealized promises, and by exaggerated representations of what they were to expect in the land to which their emigration had been solicited. They smarted under the anguish of disappointment, and if they labored at all, it was to acquire the means to go back, before closing their career, to their birth-place in Europe, and they had even impregnated their offspring with these notions. Unfortunately, Louisiana was a mere place of transient and temporary sojourn, nothing better than a hostelry, a caravansary, but *no home* for any one. How could it be loved, improved and beautified? There were none of those associations, not a link of that mystic chain connecting the present with the past and the future, which produce an attachment to locality. The waters of patriotism had not yet gushed from their spring, to fertilize the land. There were Frenchmen in Louisiana, but no Louisianians.

Now a change had come in her progressive destinies, and she found herself a portion of the Spanish monarchy. But neither under the flag of France, nor under that of

Spain was it, that Louisiana could have had the faintest conception of her future prosperity, and of the development of those immense resources, which, to unfold themselves, required the touch of a mighty magician, whose incantations a quick ear might perhaps, even at that time, have heard from afar. It was not when a poor colony, and when given away like a farm by a friend to another, ✧ royal though they were, it was not when miserably clad with the tattered livery of her colonial bondage, that she could foresee her glorious dismemberment into sovereignties, the least of which occupies so proud a position in the eye of the world. This miracle was to be the consequence of the apparition of a banner, which was not in existence at the time, which was to be the labarum of the advent of liberty, the harbinger of the regeneration of nations, and which was to form so important an era in the history of the rights of mankind.



## A P P E N D I X .

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*Extract from the Despatch written on the 12th of October, 1750, by  
Livaudais, the Hyrbor Master and Chief Pilot.*

MY LORD :

I have the honor to inform your excellency of the change which was produced at the mouth of the river (Mississippi), by the Equinox of last September. When the king's vessel, Rhinoceros, arrived in July, the bed of the Pass ran south south-east, and north north-west. This has been but too frequent for these twenty-five years, during which I have been employed here in piloting vessels in and out. I rarely took them out by the same way in which I took them in ; and these changes generally happen in October, when this river has not much current. At that time, the tides ascend thirty-three miles. Now it will be necessary for vessels wishing to come in, to anchor east north-east, and west south-west of the houses of the Balize Post.

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### *Regulations of Police.*

We Pierre Rigaut, Marquis of Vaudreuil, Governor of the Province of Louisiana, and Honoré Michel de la Rouvillière, the King's Counselor, Commissary-General of the Marine Department, and Intendant in this Province, decree in the name of the King :

#### ART. 1.

From the day of the publication of these present regulations, all persons, whatever may be their social condition, and under any pretext whatever, even with permission from our predecessors, which we annul, are prohibited from distributing any intoxicating beverage, whatever may be its nature, and from allowing it to be used for drinking at their respective houses, or even to be carried away in large or small measures ; and any person, contravening this pro-

vision of our ordinance, shall be sentenced to be imprisoned for one month, to pay ten crowns in favor of the poor, and to have all the liquors found at his house confiscated on behalf of the king's treasury.

ART. 2.

There shall be established six taverns in the town of New Orleans, under licenses to be issued to that effect.

ART. 3.

The keepers of these six taverns are permitted to supply with wine or spirits no other persons than travellers, sick people, the inhabitants, and seafaring men; and this they must do with the requisite moderation. We forbid them to furnish these articles to a soldier, under the severest penalties, and to Indians and Negroes, under the penalty of paying a fine of ten crowns, of being sentenced to the pillory, and of forfeiting by confiscation all the wines and liquors found in the house and shop of the offender; and should there be a repetition of said offence, said offender shall be sentenced to the galleys for life.

ART. 4.

We also forbid tavern-keepers, under the penalty of losing their privileges as such, to retail refreshments on Sundays and other holidays, during divine worship.

ART. 5.

We also decree that said taverns shall be closed, under arbitrary penalties, at nine in the evening of every day, and, after that time, that no one be entertained in said taverns.

ART. 6.

Said tavern-keepers shall pay for their privilege, each, the sum of two hundred livres to the ecclesiastical treasury of this parish, which needs very much such relief, and also the additional sum of one hundred livres, for the maintenance of the poor of this town, who are in a great state of destitution.

ART. 7.

There shall also be granted the privilege of keeping two liquor shops, the one to the Major in command of New Orleans, and the other to the officer commanding the Swiss company. One of these shops, shall be appropriated to the French soldiers, and the other

to the Swiss—so that the military shall drink at the places only designated for them : and the inhabitants, travellers, and seafaring-men, shall no more be received in these liquor shops, than the soldiers shall be received in the other taverns, which they must not even approach. The soldiers, however, must not be forced into going to drink at any one of these two liquor shops ; but they must do so of their own free will ; and the keepers of said shops, should they give any thing to drink to the inhabitants, travellers, seafaring-men, Indians, and Negroes, shall undergo the same penalties inflicted on the other tavern-keepers in the 3d article of this ordinance.

ART. 8.

Whereas we have been informed that certain individuals, instead of improving their lands by cultivation, have come to the town of New Orleans, or have removed to certain localities in the rural districts of this province, in order to establish pot-houses therein, by which means, they do not only tempt the fidelity of the slaves, but also induce them to rob their masters by giving them intoxicating liquors in exchange for the produce of their pilferings, we request all the honest planters to watch the deportment of these individuals in the country, in order to make us acquainted with the disorders of which they are the authors, so that we may punish them with the rigor prescribed by the ordinances.

ART. 9.

In order to check the disorders in New Orleans originating in the increased multiplicity of taverns which have been established therein without permission, we decree, that eight days from and after the date of the present publication, all the inhabitants of the German Parish, and of other parishes, who have abandoned their lands to come and settle here, shall return to their former places of residence, under the penalty of being treated as vagrants and perturbors of the public peace, and therefore driven away from the country as people of an infamous character.

ART. 10.

All free Negroes and Negresses, living either in the purlieus of this town or in its vicinity, who may become guilty of harboring slaves, in order to seduce them and excite them to plunder their masters, and lead a scandalous life, shall lose their freedom and become the slaves of the king. We beg his majesty to make them



part of his domain, by paying per head, for every one of them, five hundred livres, to be applied to the restoration of the church of this parish, which stands in extreme need of such repairs.

ART. 11.

Any Frenchman who shall be so infamous as to become guilty of the offence described in the preceding article, shall be whipped by the public executioner, and, without mercy, be sentenced to end his life on the king's galleys, etc.

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ART. 17.

Any individual who shall buy from a slave any object whatever, without a specific written permission from the master of said slave, shall be sentenced, for the first offence, to the pillory, and, for the next, shall be condemned to serve on the king's galleys for life.

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ART. 19.

It having always been the intention of his Majesty that every individual, on his plantation or elsewhere, should punish his Negroes with moderation, as a kind father would correct his children; and most of the inhabitants of this colony having misunderstood the king's wishes on this subject, and overlooking in their slaves such faults as are too important not to be repressed, we cannot recommend too much to the owners of slaves, to be more energetic in checking their disorders, and to chastise them without passion on all proper occasions. We give them notice that, if we discover any undue laxity in the exercise of the authority herein mentioned, we shall cause the slaves whom they treat with too much lenity, to be seized and punished with exemplary severity.

ART. 20.

We forbid all the inhabitants or citizens of this colony to permit on their plantations, or at other places of residence, or elsewhere, any assembly of Negroes or Negresses, either under the pretext of dancing, or for any other cause, that is to say, excepting the Negroes whom they may own themselves. We also forbid them to allow

their slaves to go out of their plantations or premises for similar purposes, because his Majesty has prohibited all assemblies of the kind.

ART. 21.

We also forbid the town and country Negroes to assemble in the town of New Orleans, or in its vicinity, or elsewhere, under any pretext whatever, under the penalty, of said Negroes, of being imprisoned and whipped, and, besides, under the penalty, for the masters, of a fine of ten livres, for every Negro who may have assembled with said master's consent.

ART. 22.

Should any inhabitant or citizen of the province permit on his plantation or premises an assembly of Negroes other than his own, under any pretext whatever, he shall, for the first offence, pay one hundred crowns to the treasury of the church, and shall, for the next offence of the kind, be sentenced to work for life on the King's galleys.

ART. 23.

Any Negro who shall be met in the streets or public roads, carrying a cane, a rod, or a stick, shall be chastised by the first white man who shall meet him, with the very same instrument found in the possession of said Negro; and should said Negro be daring enough to defend himself or run away, it shall be the duty of the white man to denounce the fact, in order that the black man be punished according to the exigencies of the case.

ART. 24.

Any Negro or any slave, proceeding either on foot or on horseback in the streets of New Orleans, or on the public roads, during the day, and particularly during the night, shall be stopped by any white person meeting said Negro or other slave, in order to inquire for his written pass; and should said slave endeavor to escape, we exhort the citizen, cognizant of the fact, to endeavor to know who that slave may be, and to denounce him, so as to have him punished according to his desert.

ART. 25.

Whereas Negroes break down all the horses of the colony by using them immoderately, and by stealing them, not only out of

parks, but also out of their stables ; and whereas this is infinitely injurious to the agricultural labors of the colony and to the interests of individuals, we permit said negroes to be shot at when they are thus met on horseback, and when they refuse to stop on their being hailed.

#### ART. 26.

Being informed that the negroes of the town are so licentious as to come out, at night, of the houses of their masters, which they leave abandoned and open, and thereby exposed to all sorts of casualties, in order to assemble with those of the country, who come prowling through the town, to commit every kind of malfeasances, and to be drinking at the taverns, to the amount of what they can obtain for what objects they have stolen from the public and from their masters ; we exhort and even order all the citizens carefully to watch these nocturnal excesses, to which our police shall be actively alive ; and if, through our combined efforts we can discover the authors of such iniquities, the severe justice which shall be administered to them shall intimidate all others who may be disposed to produce such scandalous disorders. The inhabitants of the country may powerfully contribute to put an end to this state of things, by retaining their negroes on their respective plantations.

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#### ART. 28.

Any negro or other slave, either in town or in the country, who shall fail in the respect and submission which he owes to white people—that is to say, who may be so insolent as to elbow them on the high roads and public ways, and who, finally, forgetting that he is a slave, shall offend them in any way whatsoever, shall be punished with fifty lashes, and shall be branded with the flower de Luce on his back (*sur la fesse*), in order to make known, in case of need, the nature of his crime.

#### ART. 29.

All the negroes and other slaves who go to church, shall attend the first mass said in the morning. In the country they shall be led to church by the overseer of each gang, who shall take them back immediately after divine worship is over ; and should there be servants in the habit of following their masters to any other

mass than the first one in the morning, said servants shall stop at the door of the church, and wait there for their masters, under the penalty of being chastised.

## ART. 30.

We have just explained the respect and obligations due by the blacks to the whites, and particularly to their masters. But it is proper to inform the public that this does not apply indifferently to everybody. A private person, a soldier, or any other individual, has not the right to ill-treat a negro who is guilty of no offence towards him. In certain cases, the person offended may arrest him, and ask that he may be dealt with according to the dictates of justice, because the negro is subject only to the police regulations of the country and to the tribunal of his own master. Consequently, and in compliance with the orders of his Majesty, we forbid that any one should take the liberty to ill-treat slaves; and for any violation of this prohibition, the person so offending shall undergo an arbitrary punishment, according to the circumstances of the case.

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*Decree of the Superior Council of the Province, referred to in Page 193 of Vol. II.*

Louis, by the grace of God, King of France and of Navarre, to all who shall see these presents, greeting: We make it known that the Superior Council of the Province of Louisiana, having taken into consideration the humble representations made, this day, to that Court, by the planters, merchants, mechanics and others; and whereas the relief of a people, to whom the Council is as a father, the support of the laws, of which it is the depository and interpreter, and the improvement of agriculture and commerce, of which it is the patron, are the motives of the representations of said planters, merchants and others; said Council has proceeded to adjudicate, as follows, on these important matters:

What momentous objects are these for the Council! Can it, after having duly weighed them, give attention to any other subject, except so far as it may contribute to favor these? Let it, for a few moments, suspend its arduous labors, to attend to those subjects, which are now represented as most worthy of its attention and ministry; and thou, dear country, whose prosperity is the object of our most ardent wishes: thou, that art to us what Sparta, Athens,

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and Rome were to their zealous citizens, suffer us to pay a legitimate debt by consecrating to thee this weak tribute of our love. It will be dictated by our hearts, whose inspirations an obedient hand is ready to record.

Seven millions of royal paper constituted all the currency of this colony and the fortune of its citizens; the total withdrawing of this capital, the payment of which his Majesty suspended by an edict of October, 1759, has reduced the province of Louisiana to the most deplorable situation. We shall not undertake to enter into a detail of the calamities, of the ruined fortunes, of the downfall of families, which were the fatal consequences of that catastrophe. The Council, every time it assembles to take cognizance of the affairs of the unhappy victims of that event, has before its eyes a more striking picture of our misfortunes than it is possible for us to paint. Recovered from the depression into which they have been plunged, the citizens of Louisiana had begun at last to breathe; they had considered the conclusion of the war as the end of their misfortunes, and entertained hopes that the return of peace would be the moment destined for their relief. Agriculture (said the planter), that surest and most positive wealth for a nation, that prolific source from which flow all the blessings which we enjoy, will now be revived, and will repair, a hundred fold, during the peace the losses which we underwent during the war; commerce, without which the fruits of the earth have neither worth nor value, will be vivified and protected said the merchant. Sweet illusions and flattering projects, what is now become of you? The planter, the merchant, all ranks and classes in the colony, undergo, in the most profound peace, misfortunes and calamities which they never felt during a long and bloody war.

The first stroke by which the colony was afflicted, was the information it received of the cession made of it by his Majesty to Spain. Nobody, doubtless, will be surprised at the profound grief which this news excited in all hearts. The French love their monarch above all things, and a happy prejudice makes all men naturally incline to the government under which they are born. Let us cast a veil over this event; the pen drops from the hand of a Frenchman when he attempts to analyse it. What at present seriously occupies, and should engross the whole attention of the court, is the contemplation of those facts which are the forerunners of that slavery with which a new administration threatens the colonists of Louisiana. At one time we behold an exclusive company, which

to the prejudice of the nation, is empowered to carry on all the commerce of the remaining possessions of the French in North America ; we next see the appearance of an edict, which confines within the narrowest bounds the liberty necessary to commerce, and forbids the French to have any connection with their own nation ; it is replete with prohibitions and restraints ; the merchants of Louisiana every where meet with obstacles to be surmounted, difficulties to be overcome, and (if it be allowable to make use of such an expression) enemies of their country to be overthrown. In Europe, a period of six months will sometimes elapse before persons that fit out vessels know whether they shall obtain passports ; we have no better success at St. Domingo, when expeditions to this river (Mississippi) are in question. The Prince of Monbazon, Commander General of the island, begins to refuse them. In Louisiana, in the very centre of the colony, where a person of the meanest understanding sees, at the very first glance, how much it stands in need of encouragement and patronage, we do not meet with more favor.

The government, about twelve months ago, forbade the importation of Negroes, on the pretext that the competition would have proved injurious to a merchant of the English colonies, who was to furnish them. How terrible and how destructive a course of action is this ! It is depriving the colony of the materials best calculated to develop its resources ; it is cutting up by the roots a branch of commerce, which is of more consequence to Louisiana than all the rest put together. To promote systems of this sort is tantamount to the desire to convert into a vast forest, establishments which have cost infinite pains and trouble. The vigilance of the court will easily discover the cause of these contrarieties ; the efforts of its zeal will destroy it ; and its affection for the colony will save it from destruction. Constraint keeps the affairs of the province in a state of languor and weakness ; liberty, on the contrary, animates all things ; no one is at present ignorant that the granting of exclusive privileges may be justly considered as a sort of vampire, which imperceptibly sucks and consumes the people, drains the currency, and crushes agriculture and commerce ; it is an oppressive method, which, for the happiness of mankind, has been long since banished from the French colonies.

To what fatality is it owing that Louisiana alone sees sparks of this devouring fire again struck out ? These are no panic terrors ; and of this the court will be convinced, after perusing the decrees,

with an extract of which we have here the honor of presenting them. We shall not scruple to affirm, that the carrying of the plan which it contains into execution would ruin the colony, by giving agriculture and commerce the most dangerous wounds. The inhabitants of Louisiana already despair of the perservation of their country, if the privileges and exemptions which it has hitherto enjoyed are not continued ; if the execution of the fatal decree which has alarmed all hearts and filled them with consternation is not prevented : if an ordinance, published in the name of his Catholic Majesty, on the 6th of September, 1766, of which a copy is here subjoined, is not annulled as illegal in all its points, and as contrary to the increase of agriculture and commerce ; if finally, the mild laws under which the inhabitants have lived till now, were suffered to be violated. We should never forget the sublime discourse, which an illustrious magistrate addresses to the legislators of the earth : “ Are you,” says he, “ desirous of abrogating any law, touch it but with a trembling hand. Approach it with so much solemnity, use so many precautions, that the people may naturally conclude that the laws are sacred, since so many formalities are required for their abrogation.”

How mortifying is it for Frenchman to suffer all the rigors to which their commerce is subjected, whilst a foreign nation, their ambitious rival, openly carries on the trade of the colony, to the prejudice of the nation to which it belongs, which contributed to its establishment, and which is at the expense of it. We do not fear that it will be objected, that the French alone are not able to supply the continent with all the commodities which it wants. A loan of seven millions, which the inhabitants of Louisiana made to the king, from the year 1758 to 1763, will be an eternal monument of the extent of the French commerce, and of the attachment of the colonists to their sovereign's service.

It is just at the time when a new mine has been discovered ; when the culture of cotton, improved by experience, promises the planter the recompense of his toils, and furnishes persons engaged in fitting out vessels, with cargoes to load them ; when the manufacture of Indigo may vie with that of St. Domingo ; when the fur trade has been carried to the highest degree of perfection which it has yet attained ; it is in these happy circumstances that certain enemies to their country, and broachers of a false system, have imposed upon persons in office, to induce them to sacrifice the inhabitants of New Orleans. Let the court no longer defer the relief of



a people which is dear to it ; let it make known to those invested with royal authority the exhausted state to which this province would be reduced, if it were not soon to be freed from the prohibitions which would plunge it into irremediable ruin. What would be thought of a physician, who, being possessed of a panacea, or universal remedy, should wait for a plague in order to reveal it ? It is by the trade to the Leeward Islands that the inhabitants of Louisiana find means, every year, to dispose of four score or a hundred cargoes of lumber. Should this branch of trade be taken away, the colony would be deprived of an annual income of five hundred thousand livres at least—a sum which the work of the negroes and the application of the master produces alone, without any other disbursement. According to the observation of a celebrated author, it would be better to lose a hundred thousand men in a great kingdom by an error in politics, than to be guilty of one which should stop the progress of agriculture and commerce. It is well known that those who present plans to obtain exclusive privileges, are never without plausible reasons to make them appear economic and advantageous, as well to the king as to the public ; but the experience of all ages and all countries evidently demonstrates, that those who seek exclusions have their private interest solely in view ; that they have less zeal than others for the prosperity of the state, and have less of the spirit of patriotism.

The execution of the decree relative to the commerce of Louisiana would reduce the inhabitants to the sad alternative of either losing their harvest for want of vessels to export them, or of exchanging their commodities in a fraudulent manner with a foreign nation, exposing themselves to undergo the rigor of the law, which ordains that those who carry on a contraband trade shall lose both their lives and liberties. What a life is this ! what a struggle ! It is but too true, as has been already observed, that the report of the new ordinance alone has caused a considerable diminution, not only in the articles of luxury, but likewise in landed estates. A house which was heretofore worth twenty thousand livres would hardly sell for five thousand. Some will, perhaps, assert that the scarcity of money contributes also to this diminution. But how much greater will be the scarcity of specie when the colony shall either be delivered up to an exclusive company, or to the ambition of five or six individuals who form but one body ? It will then resemble a member grown to a monstrous bulk, at the expense of the substance of the rest which would become withered and palsied. The body



would thereby find itself threatened with a total destruction. It was only by openly favoring the introduction of negroes, that this colony was raised to the flourishing state which it appeared to have attained in 1759.

Perhaps it will be said, to dispel these alarms, that the gold and silver which has been made to abound in the place by a new administration, may indemnify for the losses of agriculture and commerce. But, judging of the future by the experience of the past and of the present, that resource will be found to be very weak, as nobody can pretend not to know that, among the various treasures which the earth contains in its bosom, gold and silver are neither the chief riches nor the most desirable. These metals have reduced their natural possessors to a deplorable state, and the masters of those slaves have not thereby become more powerful. They appear, from that moment, to have lost all spirit of industry, all disposition to work, like a laborer who should find a treasure in the midst of his field, and thereupon forsake his plough forever. Besides, how many acts of severity have been committed against peaceable citizens by a stranger, who, though invested with a respectable character, has observed none of the formalities, nor performed any of the duties prescribed by the act of cession, which provides for their peace and tranquillity. We shall mention an old ship captain, who was confined by his orders, and whose vessel was detained in port during eight or ten months, for not having been able to read in the decrees of Providence, that the vessel in which he had despatched certain packets intrusted to his care, would be cast away. A similar tyranny was exercised by the person invested with this illegal and unjust authority, against two captains belonging to Martinico, who had been guilty of no other crime than that of not having guessed that the Council of Louisiana had issued an edict forbidding the introduction of the creolized negroes of the Leeward Islands. What ill usage had an old citizen suffered, on account of a packet which has been put in the hands of the captain of one of his ships, who, having met with contrary winds, was unable to deliver it at Havana !

How shall we describe the barbarity with which the Acadians were treated ? These people, the sport of fortune, had determined, under the impulse of a patriotic spirit, to forsake all that they might possess on the English territories, in order to go and live under the happy laws of their ancient master. They arrived in this colony at a great expense, and scarce had they cleared out a

place sufficient for a poor thatched hut to stand upon, when, in consequence of some representations which they happened to make to Mr. Ulloa, he threatened to drive them out of the colony, and have them sold as slaves, in order to pay for the rations which the king had given them ; at the same time directing the Germans to refuse them a retreat. It remains to be determined whether this conduct does not border upon barbarism ; but we think we can presume to conclude, without exaggeration, that it is diametrically contrary to the political system which favors the encouragement of population in all its branches and by every means. Those who complain (and who is there so far broke to the yoke as to bear, without murmuring, inhumanities so horrid ?)—yes—we dare declare it, those who complain are threatened with imprisonment, banished to the Balize, and sent to the mines. Now, though Mr. Ulloa may have been invested with some authority, his prince never commanded him to exert it in a tyrannical manner, nor to exercise it before having made known his titles and powers. Such oppressions are not dictated by the hearts of kings ; they agree but ill with that humanity which constitutes their character, and directs their actions.

Were we to enter into a detail of all the mortifications which the French of New Orleans have undergone, we should hardly make an end of the recital. It were to be wished, for the honor of the nation, that as many of them as have transpired might be obliterated by the precious effects of the protection of the superior council, which is now applied for ; and it is foretold that the inhabitants of Louisiana will, in order that their tribulations be complete, be reduced, in process of time, to live barely on *tortillas*, although the most frugal sort of food would not be a matter of complaint on their part. In the meantime, the perservation of their lives, their obligations to their creditors, their sense of honor, which flows from the sacred source of patriotism and of duty, finally, the circumstance of the attack made on their property and means of subsistence by that very decree, induce them to offer their possessions and their blood, to preserve for ever the dear and inviolable title of French citizen. All that has hitherto been said leads them naturally to demands or requests, to which the zeal of the court for the public good, and its steadiness in supporting the laws of which his most Christian majesty has made them the depositaries, assure them that it will give the most favorable reception. But before they proceed to state their requests, they must acknowledge the kindness with which they were treated by Mr. Aubry. The

wishes of the public have always corresponded with the choice of the prince in assigning him the chief command over the province of Louisiana ; his virtues have caused the titles of honest man and equitable governor to be adjudged him ; he never made use of his power but to do good, and all unjust deeds have to him ever appeared impossible. They are not afraid of being reproached that gratitude has made them exaggerate in any particular. To neglect bestowing deserved praises is to keep back a lawful debt, and they conclude, finally, by intreating the court :

1. To obtain that the privileges and exemptions which the colony has enjoyed, since the cession made by the company to his most Christian majesty, be maintained, without any innovations being suffered to interrupt their course and disturb the security of the citizens.

2. That passports and permissions be granted from the governors and commissioners of his most Christian majesty, to such captains of vessels as shall set sail from this colony to any ports of France or America whatever.

3. That any ship sailing from any port of France or America whatever, shall have free entrance into the river, whether it sail directly for the colony, or only put in accidentally, according to the custom which has hitherto prevailed.

4. That freedom of trade with all the nations under the government of his most Christian majesty be granted to all the citizens, in conformity to the king's orders to the late Mr. D'Abbadie, registered in the archives of this city, and likewise in conformity to the letter of his Grace the Duke of Choiseul, addressed to the same Mr. D'Abbadie, and dated the 9th of February, 1766.

5. That Mr. Ulloa be declared to have, in many points, infringed and usurped the authority hitherto possessed by the government and council of the colony, because all the laws, ordinances and customs direct, that said authority shall not be exercised by any officer until he shall have complied with all the formalities prescribed ; and this condition Mr. Ulloa has not observed. He should, therefore, be declared to have infringed and usurped the authority of the government :—1. For having caused the Spanish flag to be set up in several parts of the colony, without having previously caused to be registered in the archives of the superior council, the titles and powers which he may have had, and of which the assembled citizens might have been informed. 2. For having of his own accord, and by his own private authority, insisted upon captains be-

ing detained with their ships in the port without any cause, and for having ordered subjects of France to be confined on board of a Spanish frigate. 3. For having caused councils, in which decrees were issued concerning the inhabitants of Louisiana, to be held in the house of Mr. Destréhan. They request that, on account of these grievances, and many others publicly known, and likewise for the tranquillity of all the citizens who apply for the protection of the council, they be freed, for the future, from the fear of a tyrannical authority, and exempted from observing the conditions enjoined in the said decree, by means of the dismissal of Mr. Ulloa, who should be ordered to embark on board of the first vessel which shall set sail, in order to depart, whenever he thinks proper, out of the dependencies of this province.

6. That orders be given to all the Spanish officers who are in this city, or scattered throughout the posts appertaining to the colony, to quit them, in order to depart likewise, whenever they shall think proper, out of the dependencies of the province; and, finally, that the court be pleased to order that its decree, when rendered, be read, published, and set up in all the usual places of the town, and collated copies sent to all the posts of the said colony.

The foregoing representations being signed by five hundred and thirty-six persons—planters, merchants, tradesmen, and men of note; considering likewise the copy of the decree, published by orders of his Catholic Majesty, neither signed nor dated, and another copy of an ordinance published in this city by order of Mr. Ulloa, of the 6th of September, 1766; the interlocutory decree issued yesterday, upon the requisition of the king's attorney-general, ordering and directing that, before the decision of the court, the said representations be put into the hands of Messrs. Huchet de Mernion and Piot de Launay, titular councilors, to be by them examined, and afterwards communicated to the king's council, in order that what the law directs may be enacted concerning them—all these particulars being taken into consideration, the king's attorney stood up and said:

“GENTLEMEN—The first and most interesting point to be examined is the step taken by all the planters and merchants in concert, who, being threatened with slavery, and laboring under grievances which have been enumerated, address your tribunal, and require justice for violations of the solemn act of cession of this colony.

“Is yours a competent tribunal? are these complaints just?

“I shall now proceed to demonstrate the extent of the royal au-

thority vested in the superior council. The parliaments and superior councils are the depositaries of the laws, under the protection of which the people live happy ; they are created and organized to be, from the very nature of their official tenure, the sworn patrons of virtuous citizens, and they are established for the purpose of executing the ordinances, edicts and declarations of kings, after they are registered. Such has been the will and pleasure of Louis, the well-beloved, our liege lord and king, in whose name all your decrees, to the present day, have been issued and carried into execution. The act of cession, the only title of which his Catholic Majesty's commissary can avail himself, to make his demands *auctoritate et proprietate*, was addressed to the late Mr. D'Abaddie, with orders to cause it to be registered in the superior council of the colony, to the end that the different classes of the said colony may be informed of its contents, and may be enabled to have recourse to it upon occasion ; that instrument being calculated for no other purpose.

“ Mr. Ulloa's letter, dated from Havana, July 10, 1765, which expresses his dispositions to do the inhabitants all the services they can desire, was addressed to you, gentlemen, with a request to make it known to the said inhabitants that, in thus acting, he would only discharge his duty and gratify his inclinations. The said letter was, by your decree, after full deliberation, published, set up and registered, as a pledge of happiness and tranquillity to the inhabitants. Another letter of the month of October last, written to Mr. Aubry, proves that justice still continues to be administered in the colony in the name of Louis the well-beloved. It results from the solemn act of cession and its accessories, that the planters, merchants and other inhabitants have the most solid basis to stand upon, when they present you with their most humble remonstrances ; and that you, gentlemen, are fully authorized to pronounce thereupon. Let us now proceed to a scrupulous examination of the act of cession, and of the letter written by Ulloa to the Superior Council. I think it likewise incumbent on me to cite, word for word, an extract of the King's letter, which was published, set up and registered.

“ This very solemn act of cession, which gives the title of property to his Catholic Majesty, secures for the inhabitants of the colony the preservation of ancient and known privileges ; and the royal word of our Sovereign Lord, the King, promises and gives us ground to hope for others, which the calamities of war have pre-

vented him from making his subjects enjoy. The ancient privileges having been suppressed by the authority of his Catholic Majesty's commissioner, property becomes precarious. The act of cession, which was the mere result of good will and friendship, was made with reserves which conform the liberties and privileges of the inhabitants, and promises them a life of tranquillity, under the protection and shelter of their canon and civil laws. As property accruing from a cession by free gift cannot be claimed and obtained, except on the condition of complying, during the whole possession of said property, with the reserves contained in said act of cession, our sovereign lord, the king, hopes, and promises himself that, *in consequence of the friendship and affection shown to him by his Catholic Majesty, he (said C. M.), will be pleased to give such orders to his governor, and to all other officers employed in his service in said colony, as may be conducive to the advantage and tranquillity of the inhabitants, and that they shall be ruled, and their fortunes and estates managed according to the laws, forms, and customs of said colony.* Can Mr. Ulloa's titles give authority to ordinances and orders which violate the respect due to the solemn act of cession? The ancient privileges, the tranquillity of the subjects of France, the laws, forms, and customs of the colony are rendered sacred by a royal promise, by a registering ordered by the superior council, and by a publication solemnly decreed and universally known. The sole aim of the letter of our sovereign lord, the king, was to grant to the different classes of the colony a recourse to the act of cession. Therefore, nothing can be better grounded or more legal than the right of remonstrating, which the inhabitants and citizens of the colony have acquired by royal authority.

“Let us proceed to an examination of the letter of Mr. Ulloa, written to the superior council of New Orleans, dated the 10th of July, 1765. I shall here cite, word for word, the article relative to the superior council and the inhabitants :

*“I flatter myself, beforehand, that it will afford me favorable opportunities to render you all the services that you and the inhabitants of your town may desire—of which I beg you to give them the assurance from me, and let them know that, in acting thus, I only discharge my duty and gratify my inclinations.*

“Mr. Ulloa proved thereby the orders which he had received from his Catholic majesty, conformably to the solemn act of cession, and manifested a sentiment which is indispensable in any governor who is desirous of rendering good services to his king in the colonies.



“Without population there can be no commerce; and without commerce no population. In proportion to the extent of both is the solidity of thrones; both are fed by liberty and competition, which are the nursing mothers of the State, of which the spirit of monopoly is the tyrant and step-mother. Without liberty there are but few virtues. Despotism breeds pusillanimity and deepens the abyss of vices. Man is considered as sinning before God, only because he retains his free will. Where is the liberty of our planters, of our merchants, and of all our other inhabitants? Protection and benevolence have given way to despotism: a single authority would absorb and annihilate everything. All ranks, without distinction, can no longer without running the risk of being taxed with guilt, do any thing else but tremble, bow their necks to the yoke, and lick the dust. The superior council, the bulwark of the tranquillity of virtuous citizens, has supported itself only by the combined force of the probity and disinterestedness of its members, and of the confidence of the people in that tribunal. Without taking possession of the colony, without registering, as was necessary, in the superior council, his titles and patents, according to the laws, forms, and customs of the colony, and without presentation of the act of cession, Mr. Ulloa has caused a president, three councilors, and a secretary, nominated for the purpose, to take cognizance of facts which belonged to the jurisdiction of the superior council, and in which French citizens were concerned. Often did discontents and disgusts seem to force you to resign your places, but you have always considered it as a duty of your station of councillors to the most Christian king, to alleviate and calm the murmurs of the oppressed citizens. The love of your country, and the sense of the justice due to every citizen who applies for it, have nourished your zeal; it has always been rendered with the same exactness, although you never thought proper to make representations on the infractions of the act of cession. You have always feared to give encouragement to a mass of discontented people, threatened with the most dreadful calamities; you have preferred public tranquillity. But now the whole body of the planters, merchants and other inhabitants of Louisiana apply to you for justice.

“Let us now proceed to an accurate and scrupulous examination of the grievances, complaints, and imputations contained in the representations of the planters, merchants and other inhabitants. What sad and dismal pictures do the said representations bring before your eyes! The scourges of the last war, a suspension to

this day of the payment of seven millions of the king's paper money, issued to supply the calls of the service, and received with confidence by the inhabitants of the colony, had obstructed the ease and facility of the circulation; but the activity and industry of the planter, and of the French merchant, had almost got the better of all difficulties. The most remote corners of the possessions of the savages had been discovered, the fur trade had been carried to its highest perfection, and the new culture of cotton, joined to that of indigo and tobacco, secured cargoes to those who were engaged in fitting out ships. The commissioner of his Catholic Majesty had promised ten years of free trade, that period being sufficient for every subject of France, attached to his sovereign lord and king. But the tobacco of this colony being prohibited in Spain, where those of Havana are the only ones allowed, the timber (a considerable branch of the income of the inhabitants), being useless to Spain, which is furnished in this article by its possessions, and the indigo being inferior to that of Guatemala, which supplies more than is requisite to the manufactories of Spain, the returns of the commodities of the inhabitants of this colony to the Peninsula became a ruinous trade, and the said inhabitants were reduced to the most dreadful destitution. His Catholic Majesty's commissioner had publicly declared his conviction of the impossibility of this country's trading with Spain: all patronage, favor, encouragement, were formally promised to the inhabitants; the title of protector was decreed to Mr. Ulloa; the hope and activity necessary to the success of the planter were nourished by the faith and confidence reposed in these assurances of the Spanish governor.

“ But by the effect of what undermining and imperceptible fatality have we seen a house worth twenty thousand livres sold for six thousand, and plantations, all on a sudden, lose one half or two-thirds of their intrinsic value? Fortunes waste away, and specie is more scarce than ever; confidence is lost, and discouragement becomes general; the planter's cries of distress are heard on every side; the precious name of subject of France is in an eclipse, and the fatal decree concerning the commerce of Louisiana gives to the colony the last fatal stroke, which must lead to its total annihilation. The Spanish flag is set up at the Balize, at the Illinois, and other places; no title, no letters patent were presented to the superior council; time flies apace; the delays fixed for the liberty of emigration will soon expire; force will tyrannize; we shall be reduced to live in slavery and loaded with chains, or precipitately to for-



sake establishments handed down from the grandfather to the grandson. All the planters, merchants, and other inhabitants of Louisiana call upon you to restore to them their sovereign lord, the king, Louis the well beloved; they tender to you their treasures and their blood, Frenchmen to live and Frenchmen to die."

Let us proceed to sum up the charges, grievances and imputations:

"Mr. Ulloa has caused councilors named by himself, to take cognizance of facts concerning French subjects, which appertained only to the jurisdiction of the Superior Council. The sentences of that new tribunal have been signified to, and put in execution against Mess. Cadis and Leblanc. Mr. Ulloa has countenanced the negroes dissatisfied with their masters. He has presented to the Superior Council none of his titles, powers and provisions, as Commissioner of his Catholic Majesty; he has not exhibited his copy of the act of cession, in order to have it registered; he has, without the said indispensable formalities, set up the Spanish flag at the Balize, at the Illinois, and other places; he has, without legal authority, vexed, punished, and oppressed subjects of France; he has even confined some of them in the frigate of his Catholic Majesty; has, by his authority alone, usurped the fourth part of the common of the inhabitants of the town, has appropriated it to himself, and has caused it to be fenced in, that his horses might graze there.

"Having maturely weighed all this, I require in behalf of the King,

"That the sentences pronounced by the councilors nominated for the purpose, and put in execution against Mess. Cadis and Leblanc, subjects of France, be declared encroachments upon the authority of our Sovereign Lord, the King, and destructive of the respect due to his supreme justice, seated in his Superior Council, in as much as they violate the laws, forms, and customs of the colony, confirmed and guaranteed by the solemn act of cession.

"That Mr. Ulloa be declared to have violated our laws, forms and customs, and the orders of his Catholic Majesty, in relation to the act of cession, as it appears by his letter, dated from Havana, on the 10th of July, 1765.

"That he be declared usurper of illegal authority, by causing subjects of France to be punished, and oppressed, without having previously complied with the laws, forms, and customs, in having his powers, titles, and provisions registered by the Superior Council, with the copy of the act of cession.

“ That Mr. Ulloa, Commissioner of his Catholic Majesty, be enjoined to leave the colony in the frigate in which he came, without delay, to avoid accidents or new clamors, and to go and give an account of his conduct to his Catholic Majesty ; and, with regard to the different posts established by the said Mr. Ulloa, that he be desired to leave in writing such orders as he shall think necessary ; that he be declared responsible for all the events which he might have foreseen ; and that Mess. Aubry and Foucault be requested, and even summoned, in the name of our Sovereign Lord, the King, to continue to govern and administer the colony as heretofore.

“ That no ship sailing from this colony shall be dispatched without passports signed by Mr. Foucault, as intendant commissary of his most Christian Majesty.

“ That the taking possession of the colony can neither be proposed nor attempted by any means, without new orders from his most Christian Majesty.

“ That Mess. Loyola, Gayarre and Navarro be declared guaranties of their signature on the bonds which they have issued, if they do not produce the orders of his Catholic Majesty, empowering them to issue said bonds and papers ; and that a sufficient time be granted them to settle their accounts.

“ That the planters, merchants and other inhabitants be empowered to elect deputies to carry their petitions and supplications to our Sovereign Lord, the King.

“ That it be resolved and determined that the Superior Council shall make representations to our Sovereign Lord, the King ; that its decree, when ready to be issued, be read, set up, published and registered.

“ That collated copies thereof be sent to his grace the Duke of Praslin, with a letter of the Superior Council, and likewise to all the posts of the colony, to be there read, set up, published and registered.”

The report, being heard, of Mess. Huchet de Kernion and Piot de Launay, councilors and commissioners appointed for this purpose, the whole being duly weighed, and the subject deliberated upon, the Attorney-General having been heard and having retired :

The Council, composed of thirteen members, of which six were named *ad hoc*, having each of them given his opinion in writing, pronouncing upon the said representations, has declared and de-

declares the sentences rendered by the councilors nominated by Mr. Ulloa and carried into execution against Mess. Cadis and Leblanc, subjects of France, to be encroachments upon the authority of our Sovereign Lord, the King, and destructive of the respect due to his supreme justice vested in his Superior Council; has declared and declares him an usurper of illegal authority in causing subjects of France to be punished and oppressed, without having previously complied with the laws and forms, having neither produced his powers, titles and provisions, nor caused them to be registered, and that, to the prejudice of the privileges insured to them by the said act of cession: and to prevent any violence of the populace, and avoid any dangerous tumult, the Council, with its usual prudence, finds itself obliged to enjoin, as in fact it enjoins, Mr. Ulloa to quit the colony allowing him the space of only three days, either in the frigate of his Catholic Majesty in which he came, or in whatever vessel he shall think proper, and go and give an account of his conduct to his Catholic Majesty. It has likewise ordained and it ordains that, with regard to the posts established by him in the upper part of the river, he shall leave such orders as he judges expedient, making him at the same time responsible for all the events which he might have foreseen. It has requested and requests Mess. Aubry and Foucault, and even summoned them in in the name of our Sovereign Lord, the King, to continue to command and govern the colony as they did heretofore. At the same time, it expressly forbids all those who fit out vessels, and all captains of ships, to despatch any vessel with any other passport than that of Mr. Foucault, who is to do the office of intendant commissary; it has also ordered and orders, that the taking possession for his Catholic Majesty can neither be proposed nor attempted by any means, without new orders from his most Christian Majesty; that, in consequence, Mr. Ulloa shall embark in the space of three days in whatever ship he shall think proper.

With regard to what relates to Mess. Loyola, Gayarre and Navarro, the Council has decreed that they may stay in the colony and discharge their respective functions, until they have received new orders from his Catholic Majesty, and shall remain sureties of their signatures for the bonds they have issued, except they produce the orders of his Catholic Majesty. It has likewise authorised and authorises the planters and merchants to choose whatever persons they think proper, to take up their petition to our Sovereign Lord, the King, and has decreed that the Superior Council shall in like

manner make representations to our Sovereign Lord, the King ; it orders that the present decree shall be printed, read, set up, published and registered in all places and posts of this colony, and that a copy of it shall be sent to his grace the Duke of Praslin, Minister of the Marine Department.

We order all our bailiffs and sergeants to perform all the acts and ceremonies requisite for carrying the present decree into execution ; we, at the same time, empower them to do so. We also enjoin the substitute of the King's Attorney-General to superintend its execution, and to apprise the court of it in due time.

Given at the Council Chamber, on the 29th of October, 1768.

By the Council,  
GARIC,  
*Principal Secretary.*

I protest against the decree of the Council, which dismisses Don Antonio de Ulloa from this colony ; their most Christian and Catholic Majesties will be offended at the treatment inflicted on a person of his character, and notwithstanding the small force which I have at my disposal, I would, with all my might, oppose his departure, were I not apprehensive of endangering his life, as well as the lives of all the Spaniards in this country.

Deliberated at the Council Chamber, this 29th of October, 1768.

(Signed)

AUBRY.

Collated with the original left among the minutes of the Council, by me the first secretary, whose name is hereunto affixed, at New Orleans, on the 2d of November, 1768.

GARIC,  
*Principal Secretary.*

END OF VOL. II.











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